

ADELINE ST. JULIAN;

OR,

THE MIDNIGHT HOUR.

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Ashbrook —

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A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY MRS. ANNE KER,

AUTHOR OF THE HEIRESS DI MONTALDE, &c.

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ADELINE ST. JULIAN;

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CHAP. XV.

WHEN Madame de Belmont reached Alphonso's house, she began preparing every thing that was necessary for his use, to be conveyed to him early in the morning; as she deemed it proper for him to remain where he was, as the cavern would afford him a safe asylum, till the search made after him, by his enemies, was a little blown over, and where also he could concert the means to act for his preservation.

Happy to find him restored to her, she determined that no effort of her's should be wanting to make his retirement as comfortable as the nature of his melancholy situation could admit of.

She now revolved his seizure and detention over and over in her mind, and the more she reflected, the greater was her perplexity—something mysterious was annexed to it.—That the Count St. Julian should have any thing to accuse him of much astonished her, especially as Alphonso had, in private conversations, declared he never had any personal knowledge of him, or acquaintance with his character, otherwise than that he was a great favorite with the King, whom, in many instances, he seemed to govern.—What then could be his charge against Alphonso de Semonville? A ray of hope elevated to extacy, yet checked by fear, bordering on agony, darted on her fancy, and

and struck her heart with terror. Her vivid imagination believed the Count must have had some knowledge or suspicion of Alphonso's attachment to Adeline, and, in all probability, that unfortunate young woman had fallen into his hands.—The thought was distraction, and harrowed up every dormant feeling of her soul, now alive to every acute sensation of extreme sensibility, and she could account for her mysterious loss, and long absence, no other way; and the confinement of the Baron de Semonville seemed to elucidate the mystery of her disappearance.

These afflicting sensations, robbed Madame de Belmont of repose,—incapable of receiving any refreshment from the downy influence of peaceful slumber, she passed the night in agonizing conjectures, and early in the morning dispatched Eustace to Paris with the letter, and hastened herself to convey every necessary

refreshment to the unfortunate inhabitants of the cave.

Elated was the faithful Eustace as he departed for the Count de Montmorenci's; happy to be once in his life the herald of good news, which he flattered himself he should be to the Count, of whom he meant to demand a private conference, that he might deliver the letter unobserved, and answer his inquiries without witnesses.

In the mean time, Madame de Belmont withdrew privately to the forest, carrying with her what she deemed necessary. She found Alphonso had passed a restless night, as his thoughts were wholly on the mysteriously concealed Adeline. Elinor had not yet appeared, and they set down to talk over their former affairs, before they disturbed her; as, after so long a confinement in misery, they judged a continuation of comfortable repose,

pose, might greatly accelerate her recovery, and recruit her strength and spirits, which suffered uncommon lassitude from long debility.

Madame de Belmont first started the idea of Alphonso's seizure, by order of the Count St. Julian, as being the consequence of Adeline's loss, supposing it was through jealousy he had found means of getting him removed, and fancied Adeline was, in all probability, detained by him. The thought was madness to Alphonso,—for, during the time he was in prison, what might she have suffered!—and also the Count might have removed her from place to place, till she was beyond the reach of their pursuit, fearful of her being traced. But supposing it most probable she was wherever the Count resided, and he having several seats, at various parts of France, they thought it proper that some one should make the

inquiry as private as possible, at which he now resided, and Eustace was fixed on as the agent to discover it.

Alphonso's impatience was extreme, but stern necessity compelled him to wait till the necessary intelligence could be gained, when he determined to run all hazards, and depart as secret as he could from the forest, to regain her, if possible, or perish in the attempt.

These were the ideas which filled their minds, and formed his resolution, before Elinor made her appearance. Her countenance wore an extreme dejection, though her frame had received benefit from her night's rest—but the sufferings of De Castelle, and what he yet might suffer—the deprivation of every flattering hope, which once her enraptured fancy fondly indulged in, the sweet soothing idea of enjoying reciprocal affection, and whose tender heart had suffered the piercing blights of
misfortune,

misfortune, and the bitterness of disappointment; these afflicting truths most powerfully engrossed her thoughts;—she feared to review the past—she dreaded to examine the future, as she could scarce entertain a hope for his safety, so powerful were the combination of his enemies, so determined on his destruction, as the confession and death of Clara fully evinced, that she believed they would stop at nothing, however false or villainous, to obtain their ends.

The solitary party sat down to breakfast, and endeavoured to gain a cheerfulness from the comforts of their present situation, being so great a contrast to that so lately experienced.

Madame De Belmont continued with them the principal part of the day, administering every consolation in her power, particularly to Elinor, whose situation required every tenderness she was capable

of bestowing ; and forming plans for their future conduct, as extreme caution was absolutely necessary.—Elinor regarded her as a blessing sent from heaven, as she experienced from her an affection truly maternal ; and such a bewitching tenderness dwelt on every accent she uttered, as made her, freely, and without disguise, mention every circumstance of her life, and unfortunate state of the partner of her tenderest affections, as she entertained not a thought of Madame de Belmont's revealing any confidence reposed in her.

Madame de Belmont provided a comfortable repast for dinner, and endeavoured to make the pangs of uneasiness and impatience lose some of their poignancy by her persuasions ; and beguiled their bosoms of some of their misfortunes, while her own felt distress she was scarce able to conceal.—When evening came,

came, she bade them adieu, and returned home, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Count de Montmorenci, who was ardently expected by all.

Elinor suffered severely in mind,—for although she longed to see her father to relate her misfortunes, and hear him breathe the voice of compassion, yet how could she present herself before him in her unhappy situation?—The secret of her marriage and connection with De Castelle, her long concealment of their mutual attachment, which she feared might greatly enrage him; and if the Count was implacable, her avowal of that marriage would arm another powerful enemy against her unfortunate husband; such as the Count's single declaration was sufficient to condemn him to death! She certainly had claims on her father's tenderness,—he had ever been kind and indulgent;—but, should he now be the
B 5 reverse,

reverse, she had every evil to expect;—yet she scorned to disguise her situation by not owning the truth, and blushed to think that she had let concealment take place of paternal confidence, and now trusted her relating every circumstance, with exact sincerity, would actuate the Count to forgive the error she had been guilty of.

The time that intervened was long and dreary to those whose impatience outstripped the fleetness of time:—it was impossible for the Count to arrive till two days and nights had elapsed, when, on the third day, at noon, the Count, attended only by Eustace, arrived at Alphonso's dwelling, and was welcomed by Madame de Belmont with every sentiment of joy and respect.

He eagerly inquired for his daughter, and Madame de Belmont gave him a slight account of her sufferings, while he partook

partook of some refreshments, as his impatience to see his daughter would not permit him time to inquire into particulars;—but that lady informed him, he must endeavour to be content till evening, as she could not endanger Elinor or Alphonso's safety by introducing him sooner.

The anxiety he felt for his daughter, made him desirous to know more;—and he listened attentively to Madame de Belmont's description of her sufferings and release by Alphonso, who had been confined, near her, ever since he so mysteriously disappeared the night he last was at the Count's.

The Count was extremely exasperated against the monks for the detention of his daughter;—but was much astonished to imagine for what reason Alphonso could be also taken from his friends!—Madame de Belmont intreated he would have pa-

tience till he heard more fully from *them* their late wretched situation, declaring, that Elinor's required every tenderness and indulgence, and would excite pity and compassion in the most obdurate heart!—This, she thought proper to say with regard to Elinor, with the hope that it would disarm him of all angry sensations when he beheld her; and concluded, by saying, that what she had related, was only introductory to what he might expect, and what would surpass his belief.

When twilight had spread its dusky veil over the surrounding objects, she requested the Count would accompany her, and begged, from the strange appearance of the place whither she was going to conduct him, that he would not entertain any apprehensions for his safety, as she was going to lead him to a cave, where, for fear of being pursued by the monks,

monks, when they should come to be missed, they had flown to for security ; but that he knew Eustace, as also Alphonso and Elinor's hand-writing.

" I am convinced, madam," replied he, " I have nought to fear ;—lead me to my Elinor, that I may once more embrace my daughter, and feel a happiness I never more thought of enjoying ; and, after three months absence, to have her restored.—Oh ! 'tis a joy, madame, I shall want words to express ;—and for Alphonso, the son of my worthy friend, I cannot sufficiently rejoice at his happy return ;—but great are my obligations to him, as he restores me my beloved Elinor !"

They then set out for the forest ;—Madame de Belmont leading him through the intricate windings of that sequestered place, till they reached the archway that led to one of the subterraneous passages ;

at

at the extremity a door opened that led into a kind of hall, where a lamp was burning.

The Count looked round him with astonishment !—The sound of their entrance brought Alphonso to welcome them ; and greatly rejoiced was the Count to find, in that cell of darkness, the son of his deceased friend. Alphonso immediately conducted him to Elinor, who flew to the embraces of her father, and felt a temporary relief from care, in being received with every mark of tenderness and affection.

Being somewhat recovered from the surprise and pleasure this meeting had thrown them in, Elinor sat down to relate the full particulars of her story and sufferings, (of which Madame de Belmont had given some account ;) and she implored his paternal forgiveness, if, in the course of her narrative, she declared

a fatal

a fatal secret he was ignorant of, which she feared might raise his anger,—but trusted to his goodness, when he considered how great her accumulated misfortunes had been since she was torn from his protection, he would not refuse his pardon.

The Count was all amazement at hearing her commence the account of what had been her troubles, with intreaties of forgiveness; and desired to know the truth of every thing that had happened to her.

Elinor then gave a clear and particular account, from the commencement of her connection with the unfortunate De Castelle, and all the subsequent occurrences that had followed, till released from the vault of the convent by Alphonso, on whose kind attention and services she expatiated with great warmth.

The Count appeared much displeased at the concealment so long; but kindly
with-held

with-held every semblance of resentment, alledging, that he thought she had suffered severely for her folly, and needed no addition to make her miserable, since he thought it impossible to save De Castelle.—Elinor, on her knees, thanked him for his goodness; but begged he would remain silent on account of her marriage, as there wanted but that proof to convict the unhappy man, and be a means of making his enemies rejoice.

“ I solemnly assure you, I never will,” replied the Count; “ though what you have declared has affected me beyond the power of expression; and although I pass it over lightly, because of the late horrid treatment you have so cruelly experienced, be assured I still feel the conviction of your folly:—your error has been severely punished, so has your want of confidence in me!—Rise, Elinor, and
may

may God forgive you as I do, sincerely;—but I can never forget!”

Elinor's full heart poured forth its thanks, and the Count wishing to wave the subject, as he felt extremely affected at some part of Elinor's recital, and much hurt at the declaration of other circumstances;—now he was anxious to listen to the account of Alphonso's mysterious arrest, and how he came to find his daughter.

Alphonso then minutely related these strange events that succeeded his departure from the Count's at Paris;—a tale that increased his astonishment, and which shewed what power the monks were possessed of.—Dispelling every hope of obtaining relief, as it was almost impossible to accuse them, every person being struck with awe, and dreaded to offend them, that it was in vain to expect redress:—if he commenced a prosecution
against

against them, it would endanger Elinor's safety, who would be again secured, and perhaps himself might be a sufferer from their unbounded thirst for revenge;—and for their daring to give ear to her misfortunes; and he believed, by what Elinor related, of the inhuman behaviour of Cardinal Richelieu, that he could expect no friendship or assistance from him, rather he feared the contrary, as his voice and authority had thought it necessary to condemn the unfortunate Elinor; “and none could call his power to account.”—The cardinal also had a powerful ascendancy over Louis the thirteenth, who was, in a manner, governed by this insatiably ambitious man, that all hopes of an appeal to the King, in behalf of her cause, was vanished into air.

The cardinal also, copying the example of most great men, high in office, had forgot all those services rendered him by
the

the Count de Montmorenci, which helped to exalt him to that summit of ecclesiastical dignity he now enjoyed, and he looked with disdain on all beneath the most elevated rank, except priests and monks; his interest was to court their esteem—they enjoyed his favour, by whose arts he struck the people with awe, and by many he was respected as a divinity.

The Count de Montmorenci, from a recollection of former intimacy, had not particularly paid him that homage and adulation which he wished to strike into the minds of all his beholders, and thence proceeded his private dislike to the Count, which had extended to the unfortunate Elinor,—loaded with chains,—exhausted by want—enfeebled by long captivity—and deprived of the power of rescuing herself from the cruel tyranny of her oppressors, he seemed totally prejudiced

diced against her, and determined on her destruction.

After revolving many ideas, the Count thought it most advisable to retire to England, where he could safely convey Elinor, and remain beyond the reach of the fathers; but proposed the plan of asking the King's permission to depart for a few months, as the loss of his daughter hung heavy on his mind; that, in another country, he might be better able to forget her, or possibly she might have torn herself from his protection, and he yet might discover her.

This design was the most likely to succeed—for if he obtained the King's permission to go for a few months, it would put it out of Richelieu's power to have him declared an Emigrant, and his estates confiscated, which would give infinite pleasure to the haughty Cardinal.

Supper

Supper being ended, the Count had his choice of returning with Madame de Belmont to Alphonso's house, or waiting to sleep with him.—He chose the former, being anxious to hasten back to Paris, before the intelligence of Elinor's escape had reached the Cardinal, if possible.—Alphonso begged he would privately inquire where the Count St. Julian's residence now was, as he had many country seats, but wished to know particularly where he lived at the present time. The Count promised to bring him every information he could collect, and departed with Madame de Belmont, leaving Elinor to the care of Alphonso.

Early in the morning, the Count took his leave, and repaired with all imaginable haste to Paris, to the King.—He soon obtained his request, and was retiring to prepare for his departure, as the Cardinal entered the chamber of audience,—he seemed

seemed to look with his usual haughtiness, but an air of chagrine was depicted on his brow, which made the Count believe Elinor's escape had been discovered. The Count passed him with an air of disdain, which did not pass the Cardinal unobserved, for he, who before had scarce deigned to recollect the Count, now asked an attendant if that was De Montmorenci? The Count's indignant heart was ready to burst, and longed to inform him he knew him to be a villain—but he had his own and Elinor's safety to consult, therefore, suppressed the rising emotions of his soul, and quitted the chamber without making any reply—hastening to collect his valuables, and such things as were requisite to take with him, as also to settle his house and domestics agreeable to his wish, during his absence,—and his steward at Paris was to signify his pleasure to the rest of his servants in the country.

On enquiry concerning where the Count St. Julian resided, he learnt, "that he had, about six weeks ago, retired from court, on account of ill health, to the Castle of St. Clair, near Perpignan, in the province of Roussillon, for the benefit of the sea air, at which place he now was—but was expected, in the course of the week, at Paris, on very particular business."

The Count having seen all his property properly disposed, and sent to await his arrival at Calais, set out for Alphonso's, to convey Elinor away, and to give him every information in his power, respecting the Count St. Julian.

Arriving at Alphonso's, Madame de Belmont soon conducted him to the cave. He profusely thanked Alphonso for his generous care of his daughter, and hoped that a short time would enable them to be disintangled from the snares of their enemies,

enemies, when they again might meet in more happy circumstances;—he then informed them where the Count St. Julian had retired to, and when he was expected at Paris. Elinor trembling with the fearful idea, that she never more might see De Castelle—that he, perhaps, might suffer in her absence—and she flying to a distant shore for safety, would apparently abandon him in his misfortunes—these thoughts swelled her afflicted bosom—the tear started in her eye, and trickled in silent anguish down her cheek.—She looked what she could not in her father's presence express—and Alphonso knew how to feel—the thoughts had been conveyed to him before the Count's return, that every thing she held dear or valuable in this life, she left in misery behind her. Elinor then taking an affectionate farewell of Madame de Belmont and Alphonso, and again thanking him for the services
he

he had rendered her, and wishing him success in his search after Adeline, bade them farewell, and departed with her father, conducted by Madame de Belmont.

The Count and Elinor took the road for Calais, where they embarked for England, and were soon beyond the reach of their enemies.

CHAP. XVI.

WHEN Madame de Belmont returned in the morning to Alphonso, she persuaded him to wait a few days, till it was likely the Count was gone to Paris. He seemed to acquiesce to her wish, and requested she would convey his faithful Eustace to him, that they might concert the best means of proceeding.

Madame de Belmont's next visit was accompanied by Eustace, who, although he knew of his master's absence, had no idea of his living in such a sequestered place as that was.

No sooner did he hear the mention of St. Clair's Castle, than he exclaimed, " Ah ! I know every inch of it well—I did not live seven years in that Castle to be a stranger to it now."

" What !

“What!—did you live at St. Clair’s Castle?” eagerly demanded Alphonso.

“Yes, my Lord,” replied Eustace, “I was servant to the old Monsieur Delarsonne, during the time his son was on his travels, and a worthy old gentleman he was; I remember him, God rest his soul, as if it were but yesterday.—And after he died, why then I served the young one—the Count St. Julian now.—But lack, my Lord, he was not like his father, for the old M. Delarsonne, was a worthy good gentleman, as ever lived—but *this*, a hard hearted, crabbed, surly man, as ever drew breath. I lived with him when he came to his new title, which he did not come very honestly by—faith so I think, if the truth might be spoken.”

“Declare what you know Eustace,” said Madame de Belmont, “for I am strangely and materially concerned.”

Eustace replied, " I will give my reasons, why I think so, and you may judge as you please:—You must know, Madame, there was a man lived with him, of the name of De Courcy, who was raised, on a sudden, from a poor servant, to be a gentleman, and he used often to say, he had done M. Delarsonne a great service, and *he* had honoured him out of gratitude. I thought in my heart, he was always doing great services for him, for after that, they were always together consulting in private.

" One night, about three months after, I very well remember, and of all the nights in the week, it was of a Thursday, M. Delarsonne said he wished to be in bed early, and all in the Castle were ordered to go to bed, and the doors were to be secured.—We did so, but somehow, I was not inclined to go to sleep, and about midnight, I heard a devil of a racket,
which

which seemed to be on the other side the building. I had a curiosity to know who, or what it was, so I popped down stairs, naked as I had jumped out of bed, and through the long gallery, with the intent to go through the chapel, as the noise sounded on the other side of it; but just as I entered the chapel, a private door, known only to a few, rushed open, and an ill-looking fellow, run in with a torch, lighting four others, who were carrying somebody bound neck and heels.

“ I must own, I was frightened, so I jumped up behind one of the columns that rather screened a statue of St. Mark, and I prayed heartily that St. Mark would conceal me.

“ There I plainly perceived my master's favourite De Courcy was assisting, the rest were all strangers to me intirely, for, to my knowledge, I never saw them before nor since.”

“ Oh heaven !” exclaimed Madame de Belmont, clasping her hands in agony : “ on a Thursday night it was, that the Count St. Julian was missing—pray Euface inform me all, and let me know what become of that unfortunate man.”

Euface continued, “ they hurried him out at the other end of the chapel, and I then got down from behind the statue, and followed them. They passed through a gallery on that side of the Castle, which was seldom, or never used, turned into a door on the left hand, and shut the door after them. I now thought it best to return to my own room, lest I should be found watching them, though I felt a strong desire to pry into the secrets of these midnight actions, yet if I was discovered, I knew it would be at an end, and my life perhaps pay for my curiosity ; so I hurried back through the chapel, and was in bed in a few minutes, and there I
lay

lay wondering, and wondering, who this prisoner could be.

“ About a month passed away, and then my master and De Courcy went out on particular business. As soon as they were gone, I crept through the chapel, and into the gallery, where I found the door, I was very sure I could not be mistaken in the door, but it had such strong bolts on it, enough to make one’s heart ache to look on them.—Well, to be sure, I was rather curious, so I unbolted them and the door opened to the foot of a spiral stair-case—up I ran—at the top was another dismal door that I could not open, for it was secured with *terrible* locks.—I listened, and thought I heard a hollow groan. I listened, and listened again, and still the sound of somebody mourning at a distance, I could clearly hear—what to do, I did not know, for I could not open the door, so at last, I called through

one of the key holes, and asked who was there?—something answered, but it seemed at a distance, and I could not tell distinctly what was said; so I called again and again; and at last, asked what their name was.—“The Count St. Julian,” replied the voice.—So being unable to hear more, and afraid, lest any body should find the lower door open, I went down stairs again, and bolted the door as I had found it.

“When M. Delarsonne and De Courcy returned, they seemed wonderfully pleased, and a short time after, he was created Count St. Julian.—Well, to be sure, I had some suspicions that he did not come fairly by his title, especially when I recollected hearing the prisoner say, he was the Count St. Julian, but I could take no notice of the affair; however, thought was free, and mine were strangely and plentifully occupied.

✧ Next

“ Next day, a rumour run through the Castle that it was haunted, and one of the maids was almost frightened out of her life, for being obliged to go to the chapel for something particular, she positively declared, she saw the figure of a lady, gliding backward and forward, with a stab on her breast.

“ The Count St. Julian, my master, was greatly enraged when he heard of it, and swore he would make a ghost of them that ever dared mention such a thing in future; but it was certainly truth, for many a time since then I have seen it, but never dared to speak a word about it.

“ Another week went over, when a grand treat was given to a deal of company, on account of my master's being created Count St. Julian, and the valuable estates that came to him with that title.—The servants were to make merry—wine flew about briskly, and we en-

joyed ourselves like princes.—All was mirth and jollity,—the supper consisted of every rarity, that extravagance and luxury could invent or procure, for my lord had plenty of riches, and that day in particular, they were dispersed like the dust of the earth. Strangers were brought in to make merry at this great rout, and my lord sat in the greatest pomp imaginable, to be complimented on his acquisitions, which, in my soul, I believed he came not honestly by; but it made me think, that so long as a man has money, it matters not how he comes by it, *as long* as he makes a shew and a rout, and looking on my master's company, many of whom I had never seen the shadow of their faces, but who seemed all condescension and hilarity with the Count, so I thought many of you may be like my master,—look into your hearts, your consciences may be as black as ink, while
your

your outside is as fine as gold can make you. I never knew my master to be very religious, or to copy scripture, but this once, for this feast, seemed to agree with that part, where Our Lord speaks of a great supper, and they were in want of company, where he bids them fetch in the strangers out of the streets, the lame, and the blind, for many that were there, were quite strangers to the Count, and never saw his face before; and many were wilfully blind to his faults, for he never bore the best name in the world; but now he was the Count St. Julian, with a very great fortune, and that was sufficient to make him the best creature existing.

“ While all were merry, and in high glee, my mind was strangely employed about the prisoner, who said, he was the Count St. Julian, and I thought how easy my master appeared to sit, enjoying another man’s name and property, while he

kept the lawful owner confined under the very same roof, where all this jollity was going forward at his expence; and what a wicked heart my master must have, that could exhibit such a smiling countenance, at the same time be conscious of the treacherous part he was acting. However, it seemed as if heaven did not approve of the proceedings and feast at the Castle of St. Clair, for it was a dreadful stormy night, I can well remember, the thunder was terrible, and the rain uncommon.

“ Still the unfortunate prisoner run in my mind, and I took the earliest opportunity to slip away from the company in the hall, and thought I would take a peep into the gallery, and indulge the idea of the contrast between the situations of these two, he that *was* the Count, and he that now enjoyed that name.

“ As

“ As I was going through the chapel, I thought I saw the glimpse of something move, so I stepped on, though I must own, rather afraid, for I saw a strange man walking there. At that instant, a figure of a lady stood before me, her garments spotted with blood, and she pointed with her finger towards the secret door.

“ What! open the door?” I said. The spirit, for such it really was, bowed its head.

“ For God’s sake, who are you? said I, turning to the man who looked rather genteel, though very dirty, he replied, “ a miserable wretch, torn from all I hold dear, and basely confined by a villain who seeks to deprive me of my rights,—I am the Count St. Julian.”

“ I did not stay to give him an answer, but touched the secret spring in the private door, I passed on, and bade him follow, and the door closed after us.

“ We

“ We had a good way to go, before we reached the outer door, as the stairs we descended led to a subterraneous passage, that opened a good way from the Castle : so I opened the door, and said, there, God bless you—be gone.—He was about to thank me, and stared at me quite astonished, but I almost pushed him out, and shut the door after him, afraid of both him and myself ; and as I said before, it was a terrible night, not fit to turn a dog out, for the rain poured in torrents, and the thunder grumbled horribly through the air, but I thought better turn him out to the mercy of the storm, and let him have a chance for escaping, than be confined there, for the Lord knows what. I love liberty my Lord, and for my part, I would not keep a poor mouse in confinement, if it was in my power to let it go. So, as I was saying, I fastened the door, and fearfully paced my way back, for had
I been

I been found in the private passage, my life must have paid for it I dare say.— About half way along the passage, was another secret door, that communicated to a part which led to the kitchen, so I got into the Castle that way, fearing if I returned through the chapel to meet De Courcy. I now went cheerfully into the hall,—drank two or three bumpers of wine, and most heartily and sincerely did I pray, that the prisoner I had released, would get safe out of the Count's clutches. The Company soon after broke up, and I went quietly to bed.

“ Next day, the Count went to take possession of his new estates, and De Courcy was left behind at the Castle of St. Clair ; but in the course of the day, he grew very sorrowful, and looked sad ;— I fancied he had missed the prisoner, but he said not a word :—to be sure, the business was all his own, and I am sure, he
never

never could suspect his going out at the secret door, for hardly any body knew of it.

“ For three days De Courcy looked very melancholy, and still the Castle continued to be haunted, but how De Courcy made the prisoner’s escape out, I cannot tell. I lived there almost four years afterwards, and the Count and De Courcy seemed very good friends, and so I left them.”

“ Wonderful are thy ways, O providence !” exclaimed Madame de Belmont, clasping her hands fervently.—Then St. Julian did not perish in the Castle of St. Clair, but what can have become of him, during a period of more than eighteen years ?—He has never since been heard of, dead or alive.—If he lives, what place contains him, and why does he not appear to claim his rights ?”

Various conjectures floated in their minds, concerning the unfortunate Count

St.

St. Julian, but neither could form any idea of what might be his real situation. Alphonso ordered Eustace to prepare every thing that was necessary for his departure, and to be in readiness to attend him, as he resolved to proceed to the Castle of St. Clair, and regain Adeline, or perish in the attempt.

CHAP. XVII.

A Few days passed away awaiting the preparations for their departure, when Madame de Belmont was astonished at the receipt of a letter, directed for her, at the Baron de Semonville's. Her heart fluttered as she examined the superscription, and thought it was the writing of Adeline,—scarcely hoping it was really Adeline's, and dreading lest it should contain any ill, the agitations of her mind made her hesitate. At length, she broke the seal, and to her extreme joy, found the signature to be her beloved, long lost Adeline. It was this ;

Dearest Mother,

After a period of so many tedious weeks, I judge what must be your amazement

amazement to receive any thing from me, and to know that I still exist.

Ah ! I imagine what you must have suffered, by what I have felt during the dreadful lapse of time that has divided us. It is by miracle I am enabled to give you this—heaven knows ! if the promise I have this minute received of having this letter conveyed safely to your hands, may not be meant to deceive me, and lead me into new difficulties. I have been indulged by my jailer, (who is now very ill, and cannot move out of bed) either from pity or remorse, with some paper to write to you.—Miserable wretch ! it seems to me, as if conscious of former guilt, he would endeavour, by this lenity, to atone for his misdeeds. He informs me, I am at the Castle of St. Clair, in the province of Rouffillon, and I know I am in the power of the abominable Count St. Julian.—I was seized by him at La Salvetat,

tat, put into his carriage, and conveyed here. More particulars I cannot explain in a letter; and believe me, my heart beats with such emotion in the hopes of once more writing to you, that I can scarce hold my pen, or dictate the feelings of my soul. I must lay it aside for the present, and endeavour to tranquillize my mind.

MIDNIGHT.

The Castle clock tolls the solemn hour of midnight. I have watched the glorious orb of day, till it has run its diurnal round, and sunk beneath the hills,—the fleecy clouds have lost their effulgence—the twinkling stars now irradiate the shades of night. What a gloom hangs around, and spreads its influence over every object as I look through the grating of my prison window—Oh! my mother—the solitary pleasure I now feel, has been the sole comfort of thy Adeline for many,
many

many nights, and has partly helped to chase away the horrors, that agitate my mind during the day.

At this dusky hour, what an awful stillness reigns!—every tumultuous noise is hushed in silence;—no sound disturbs the solemn quiet that envelopes the Castle. Oh! why St. Julian dost thou persecute me?—why torment me with thy odious addresses and proposals, when by nature we are enemies, and no other sentiment but detestation, should ever enter my heart.—Why does every thing enjoy peace but Adeline?—She wakes to anticipate what may come to-morrow.—The gentle gales have lulled themselves to rest—the bat has left his sequestered retirement, and is playing through the bars of my prison window, but even the bat flies from the sorrowing Adeline, my feeble lamp chases the dull companion, and I am left alone. The moon is now rising
over

over the eastern hills,—how grand—how beautiful her appearance! this heavenly prospect gives a serenity to my troubled mind, and recalls sensations of a tender nature, when I have enjoyed liberty in the dear forest of St. Amans, where first indulgent heaven presented the worthy Alphonso. My dearest mother, guardian of my youth, is Adeline still dear to you? —Alphonso, dost thou ever heave a sigh for me? has not my absence, and many things of more immediate concern, made thee forget me? the thought chills my heart, and calls forth the tear of affection, that swells my bosom with indescribable anguish.—Yet no,—I flatter myself Alphonso is still the same.

Hark!—what scream was that? every thing alarms me—it is the wailing owl, that breaks the solemn silence,—how mournful its complaints—what dreary sounds float in the air; ill omened bird,
thy

thy noise is melancholy and terrific. Oh ! now my heart is turned to a nearer concern ; I can no more contemplate the night.—What a heavenly vision ! it approaches,—the barriers of my prison, exclude not her nightly visits :—sweet sufferer, how elegant thy form—how pale thy face—how awful thy wound !

3 O'CLOCK.

Perhaps my dearest mother will think my mind enfeebled by what I have written, and believe it the error of my senses, the weakness of imagination, from long confinement and dreadful solitude. I would fain believe it so—but no, the reality flashes conviction on me, and I no longer doubt. A vision of uncommon beauty, enters my solitary confinement almost every night ; at first, I was rather terrified, but custom has made the appearance familiar to me. I have hoped to find it the error of my bewildered brain,

have

have rose up to search where it could find entrance, for superstition had never yet so great an ascendancy over my soul;—but alas! the door of my prison has been secured, and still the charming vision seems attentive to my sorrows,—with what pleasure its languid eyes look on me as I now write.—Sweet spirit, may thy wandering soul find repose, and no more mortal cares disturb thee, is the fervent wish of one, who from the hour of her birth, was doomed to suffer misfortune—it is vanished—what can make it visit the earth! peace surely is alone found in the grave—is peace denied to thee? I will say no more, lest you accuse my senses of a derangement, which did you know my sorrows and expectations, you might suppose them sufficient to turn a firmer brain than mine.

This

“ This night seems unusually long—when will the blissful hour of six o’clock arrive, which De Courcy assures me, shall convey this to you.—Blessings attend him if he deceives me not ! If, on the contrary, my fate will be accelerated, and I consigned to peace, for I find the Count is acquainted with my real birth, and thence is his vengeance to be feared.

“ May heaven bless, preserve, and comfort you, my dear mother, and let Alphonso know, that whatever sufferings I may endure, still he will be ever nearest and dearest to my heart, which will not cease to remember you both, with the sincerest affection, while life continues in the bosom of

ADELINE.

Madame de Belmont wept as she read Adeline’s affecting letter, but a ray of hope darted on her afflicted mind, as

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the person had not deceived Adeline, in suppressing the letter,—it was a cordial to her spirits, and she fondly flattered herself Adeline might yet be restored.

She lost no time in repairing to Alphonso, whose joy at the receipt of a letter from Adeline, is not to be conceived. He hastily ordered Eustace to attend, as he would no longer delay his search for her, nor could he rest happy till they set out. Eustace retired to prepare the horses with all imaginable dispatch. Alphonso quitted the cave with Madame de Belmont, and in less than two hours, he, accompanied only by Eustace, set out for the Castle of St. Clair, and Madame de Belmont's fervent prayers attended them.

Alphonso continued on his journey with all speed, till they came to the town nearest the Castle of St. Clair, where they left their horses, and went on foot to the
Castle,

Castle, unknowing how they should gain admittance ; inquiring of a peasant, who dwelt by the road side, if the Count St. Julian was at the Castle of St. Clair,—were answered, “ that the Count went to Paris about four days ago.”—Eustace then asked if the Count was as good to travellers as report mentioned, for he had heard much spoken of his hospitality, and being rather belated and fatigued, meant to make trial of his goodness,”—“ Why, as to that,” replied the peasant, “ there are people living, who remember his father, and though the Count is pretty well, yet he comes far—very far short of old M. Delarsonne ; and I fear if you think of calling at the Castle to night, you will not be well entertained, for I hear say M. De Courcy is very ill, and keeps his bed, and it all goes as he pleases at the Castle.”—Eustace thanked him, and they proceeded.

—“ Quite to my liking,” said Eustace,

rubbing his hands.—“ The Count at Paris, and De Courcy ill, no one knows me at the Castle, so for once, my Lord, be directed by me.”

Eustace then proposed that he would go to the Castle, and say his companion, and he, had mistaken the road and lost their way; and to increase their misfortune his companion was so overcome with fatigue, that it was impossible to reach the next town to sleep, and begged the Count would be so good to permit them to remain there till morning.

Alphonso could not flatter himself with hopes of success, but submitted to Eustace's direction, and promised to be guided by his opinion.—“ If we get admittance into the Castle,” said Eustace, “ I know it so well, that trust me, I will endeavour to find Madame Adeline :” they then advanced towards the Castle of St. Clair. —It was near ten at night when they arrived

arrived within sight of that place, the moon shone beautifully on its towers, covered with ivy, whose dark shade sweetly contrasted with the stone, which received additional brightness from the effulgence of the moon, now in its height. Alphonso sighed as he cast his eyes on those lofty, and to all appearance, inaccessible towers, where perhaps his lovely Adeline pined a forrowing and disconsolate mourner.—Alphonso stopped to indulge the sad idea, they were near the private gate that entered the Castle, and Eustace pointed it out very minutely to him, then reminded him of the proposal to gain admittance into the Castle.—Without waiting his master's reply, he suddenly left him, and soon reached the Castle.

CHAP. XVIII.

ALPHONSO had scarce time for thought, his mind was greatly agitated, hope, fear, and doubt, by turns, possessed his bosom—Eustace soon returned—"I have succeeded," said he, "the Count is absent, but the steward consents to receive us, and that is sufficient, lean on my arm, and seem very tired, sir, we shall succeed I hope." Animated by the flattering expectation of learning some tidings of his beloved Adeline, and leaning seemingly for support on Eustace, he soon arrived at the gate of the Castle.

They were conducted into a parlour, where refreshments were set forth, and those who attended seemed sorry for their situation, but they soon understood that the Count was very hospitable with
regard

worthy old master M. Delarsonne, not moved from its nail yet—and there hangs the crucifix he brought back from Loretto, when the monks there, cured him of the bite of a viper—there too is the figure in black armour, that fought in the Crusades, and built the Castle of St. Clair, and old stories went about that he haunted the Castle in that very black armour, but I never believed them, for I never met him any where else but in that corner, where he has stood upright and dressed as you see, for time immemorial—and by good luck they have not fastened the door.”

In about half an hour they heard the Castle was secured, and all retired to rest. Eustace waited a short time to listen—silence reigned throughout the Castle.—Eustace put off his shoes, and softly descended the stairs, the lamps which still glimmered in the different parts assisted him. He directed his steps towards the chapel,

as

as through *that* led to a part more uninhabited, and where probably Adeline might be confined.

He passed the chapel, and all was silent as death!—Entering the gallery that led to the spiral stair-case of the prison, formerly occupied by the Count St. Julian, he was somewhat surprised to find the door open, which formerly was strongly bolted. He ascended the stairs;—the door of the prison was open, and a lamp still remained on the table, which cast a faint gleam on the surrounding melancholy gloom. He minutely examined every part, and fancied it the prison of Adeline; but much wondered how the doors came to be left open, and where she could be, or the inhabitant, be it who it would.

After looking particularly all round, he softly descended the stairs to return to the gallery, and thought he saw the vision

that had formerly met his eyes, glide into the chapel.—Eustace had no inclination to return, but proceeded along the gallery, searching every chamber that seemed open, in hopes of meeting the hapless Adeline:—unluckily, he could not see her;—but twice the spectre passed him, and looked wistfully on him!—his heart shuddered at the sight!—something, allied to fear, checked his pursuit, and he had some thoughts of returning to the chamber of Alphonso; but that he could not regain without passing the chapel; and terror, which very seldom asserted its sway, would scarce allow it.—As he was proceeding along the gallery, a shrill voice vibrated in his ears, saying,—“Save Adeline!”—which occasioned him to start, and he believed it only fancy, as his mind was so intent on that lady;—but at that instant the spectre passed him, and again the solemn injunction was pronounced,—

“Save

“ Save Adeline !”—and he thought *it* was interested in Adeline’s safety.—“ Save Adeline !—ay, that I will, if there is a possibility,”—said he, and deriving courage from the positive commands, he stepped forward, and in a few minutes entered the chapel.

When Eustace arrived there, he was greatly surprized to find a female form moving therein, and stepping close, discovered it to be Adeline !—She started as he approached, but being no stranger to his countenance, her surprise soon vanished.—“ How gained you entrance into the castle, Eustace,” said she, “ I am alarmed for your safety !”—“ Fear not,” replied Eustace, lowering his voice,—“ my master rests beneath this roof ;—we are come to take you from here, if possible ; the Count is out of the way—when will he return ?”

“ In two or three days he is expected,” said Adeline ;—“ but is it possible Al-

phonso is here?—yet, be cautious;—this is the first night I have been permitted to return to my prison unattended:—I may be once more favoured;—but when the Count returns, this liberty, the indulgence of my prison-keeper, ceases. This way leads to my dreary abode, and hither also I have been led by the vision that is my constant, nightly companion:—last night it pointed to that wall, and I have examined every part; but alas! Eustace, no means of escape presents itself!”

“There is a secret in that wall,” replied Eustace;—“few know besides myself; and if the same means remain that once did, will you meet me here to-morrow night, about this hour, if I can contrive the means? for I must now to my master, to form our plan of proceedings.—God bless you, Madam, and may the good spirit that haunts these walls, assist us to get out of the Count’s snares.”

Saying

Saying this, he left her;—and Adeline, with uplifted hands, implored assistance from heaven, and that they might succeed.

Alphonso's joy is not to be described, when Eustace returned, and declared he had seen and conversed with Adeline, and that she had promised to meet him to-morrow night in the chapel.—“The only difficulty,”—said Alphonso, “is how to gain another night's lodging in the castle.”

“Now, Sir, be guided by me,” said Eustace, “for though you are a gentleman, and a very sensible gentleman, reckoned by most people, yet you are a lover,—and love, sometimes, makes a very sensible person a very great fool:—no offence, I hope, Sir; but you will surely acknowledge that lovers do not always act reasonably. To-morrow you set off for Salces, and remain there all day;

day ; let there be a carriage waiting at a short distance from here, about midnight :—we will thank them for their hospitality in the morning. I will contrive to get into the chapel, and there are places enough to hide in ;—depend on my bringing Adeline in safety ;—if I fail, I shall be the sufferer ;—my life will answer it ; but it will be yet in your power to demand Adeline by the force of law.—Now, be particular, do you think you can sufficiently recollect the secret gate ?” I pointed it out very minutely.

“ Oh, undoubtedly,” replied Alphonso, “ I shall remember that gate, were years to intervene before I saw it again ; but I had rather stay and assist you.”

“ Ay,” replied Eustace, “ but one of us must go to prepare a carriage to convey her hence ; and it is impossible for me to explain the manner of the secret springs ; and if you knew them, you would

would not be able to find the private door."

Alphonso agreed that, of course, it were best for Eustace to remain;—and the night was past in forming and rejecting plans, till sleep put a period to their various suggestions.

CHAP. XIX.

EUSTACE took his leave of the party with whom he breakfasted, saying, he would go to the next town for a conveyance, and meet his companion half way, who really was ill from the fatigue he experienced the day before;—and as one was rising to open the door for him, he requested he would sit still and enjoy his breakfast, for he could let himself out.—The servant seated himself again—wished him a good journey, and Eustace opened the castle-gate and shut it seemingly after him again very loud.—Alphonso sat talking about an hour on various subjects, and Italy became a-topic of discourse, as one of the Count's servants came from thence.—He then took his leave, thanking them profusely for the
kind

kind reception and entertainment bestowed on him and his fellow-traveller, and then was escorted to the gate by one of the domestics.

What an age of torment was it for Alphonso to sustain till midnight. Yet, painful as it was, he was compelled to endure it.—Heavily rolled the tedious moments, and he blest them as they glided away. Never did the approach of night bring such charms as the present:—anxious to behold his Adeline in safety, as also for his faithful Eustace, who had ventured his life to serve him.

Alphonso's impatience could ill brook the tardy hour of midnight;—at half an hour past ten a carriage was ready, and he was carried to a part pointed out, there to await the arrival of Eustace and Adeline. It was scarce eleven when he left the carriage in a sequestered spot, to proceed to the private door, there to wait
and

wait and receive them.—Serenely beautiful were the luminous stars that glittered in the firmament;—he approached the door of the subterraneous passage;—listened—but no sound proceeded from within, and he retired, a few paces, awaiting another short interval.

As he was retreating from the door, two men advanced, that he thought, seemed to watch him very minutely.—He kept his eye fixed on them, as they also did on him, but without making any inquiry. Alphonso's fears encreased, lest his faithful Eustace had been discovered, and trembled for his fate.—Still, at intervals, he approached and passed the door, and still the two men followed, seemingly as a pry upon his actions.

He drew his sword, determined to be upon his guard, if they made any attempt to seize him.—The castle clock tolled twelve.—He drew near the door, and
fancied

fancied he heard the sound of something moving within.—The men drew near also, and Alphonso's heart beat with every contending emotion.—Often was he on the point of speaking, and knowing why they thus followed him ;—but if it should turn to a quarrel, which he certainly expected, then Adeline and Eustace's safety would be endangered.—While these thoughts floated in his imagination, he perceived the door slowly open ; his heart felt revived, and he approached the door, the men followed a few paces, and then stopped at a short distance, in apparent surprize.

In a few moments Eustace appeared, bearing in his arms Adeline to all appearance bereft of life. Alphonso flew to receive her, but she wanted assistance, inanimate was the charming form of Adeline !—her hair hung rude and negligently on her face and bosom ;—her
heart

heart faintly beat ;—its motion had almost ceased, and life seemed winging its flight !—despair seized Alphonso !—he clasped his hands in agony, unable to bestow the necessary relief !—In this situation the two men approached, and offered their assistance ;—but Alphonso dreading, lest they should belong to the Count, was on the point of plunging his sword into the breast of the foremost !—“ Oh ! hold !” exclaimed the man, “ nor rashly mistake a friend for an enemy :—I once suffered by the Count St. Julian ;—if this also is a sufferer, let me rejoice in being instrumental to her release ;—refuse not the aid it is in my power to give ”—Without saying more, they lifted her in their arms, and begged Alphonso to conduct them : in a short time they reached the carriage, where Adeline soon recovered, and the first sound she uttered was, “ Alphonso !”

Joyful

Joyful was Alphonso to hear the sound of her voice, as he much feared for her recovery. The gentlemen looked surprised, and the shortness of the time would not allow an explanation,—Alphonso thanked them for the kind assistance they had given, and should be happy to know to whom they were indebted, but he must consult the Lady's safety, and bear her beyond the reach of a revengeful enemy; but if their time would permit, and they would take a part of their carriage to the next stage, they should be happy to have their company.—“Willingly,” exclaimed one of them, “my heart feels strangely interested, delay not a moment, be expeditious, and drive off.” They all seated themselves, and the carriage drove rapidly, till they reached the place of destination.

Adeline scarce spoke for some distance, the presence of the strangers being a check
upon

upon her inquiries, else her full heart was ready to pour forth its warmest acknowledgments to her deliverers. Her first inquiries were concerning Madame de Belmont—how she was, and how she bore her long and mysterious absence.

One of the gentlemen started at the name; “Madame de Belmont!”—exclaimed he,—“O! that name is yet familiar to my ear, and recalls the most distressing occurrences of my life to my recollection;—think me not inquisitive, nor encroaching on your secrets if I ask, had not Madame de Belmont a friendship for the Countess St. Julian, who died about eighteen years ago?”

Adeline looked astonished, and faltering, said—“Yes.”

“Oh heaven!” replied the stranger, “where can I find her?—it is to her I must apply for a world of information.—She was the most affectionate and faithful friend

friend of my lost Eloise!—dear, ill-fated woman.”

Adeline listened attentively, amazement almost deprived her of the power of articulation, at length, she eagerly asked:—“ Your Eloise!—did you—did you really say your Eloise, sir?”

“ Alas! I did,” he replied, “ and your form and accent most powerfully recal her to my remembrance; the manner of pronouncing Madame de Belmont’s name, struck my mind with something unusual, and though my Eloise has been long—long dead, your voice so exactly resembles her’s, I could almost believe I heard her speak.”

Alphonso’s amazement increased, for the strangeness of their meeting had kept them from explaining any thing concerning their situation; yet he thought some mystery was near being cleared up—he said—“ Sir, from what I have heard you
mention,

mention, and the knowledge I have of this Lady's history, inclines me to believe we are on the eve of some important discovery, in which my excellent Adeline is materially concerned."

"I am a man," replied the gentleman, "who, from the summit of happiness, the enjoyment of a plentiful fortune, an affectionate wife, and every blessing heaven could bestow, was on a sudden, by the machinations of a villain, deprived of all those comforts, and plunged into misery and despair, time has blunted the keenness of my afflictions, but never can efface them.—My fortune I may retrieve;—I am just arrived from a foreign clime, to demand justice in a court of equity, but my dear wife and children can never—never be restored."

It seemed a difficulty for him to suppress the starting tear, that spite of all his endeavours to quell, would force its way.

Adeline's

Adeline's full heart, and eyes overflowed for the stranger's sufferings; at length, she said,—“ There is a similarity between your sorrows and my father's; and if he still lives, his afflictions must be the same—torn in early life from his family and connexions, and though cruel fate deprived him of a son, yet I flatter myself, it would be some consolation to him, to know he has a daughter, who fondly venerates his memory.”

“ Pray madam,” said the stranger, “ will you honor me with your name, for my heart feels strangely interested.”

“ Since my real name,” replied Adeline, “ is known to the enemy of my family, who still pursues revenge, I do not think myself bound to conceal it any longer; for, as Alphonso has given me liberty, I mean to lay my claim and situation before the King immediately, and trust to his justice to re-instate me in

my rights.—This gentleman, who is the Baron de Semonville, but from intimacy, have accustomed myself to speak more familiarly, by calling him Alphonso, will be a powerful witness in my behalf.—I am Adeline, daughter of the late Count and Countess St. Julian, who was Eloise de Beauclair, of the city of Lyons.”

“Amazement seizes every power!”—exclaimed the stranger;—“am I so happy to live to behold a being I can call my own;—art thou indeed Adeline St. Julian? my daughter!”

As he spoke, Adeline sunk her head on Alphonso's shoulder, in a fainting fit, overcome with the joyful sounds that issued from the stranger's lips.—She soon recovered, and found herself in the embraces of a father, she never before had the happiness of receiving; it seemed illusion all; yet every incident of her early life corresponded with the stranger's ac-

count

count of himself, as left her no room to doubt.

Soon after, they arrived at their place of destination, where fatigue induced them to remain the night, and they retired to their separate apartments. After enjoying a few hours rest, and having breakfasted, they again set out for the abode of Alphonso, who was eager to present her to Madame de Belmont, as she had suffered severely by her absence.

As soon as the carriage stopped at the gate of Alphonso's house, Madame de Belmont flew out with joy to receive them, nor did the presence of the two gentlemen, who accompanied them, prevent her folding her beloved girl in her arms, and welcoming her return with the embraces of a truly maternal love; yet she was astonished to see the two gentlemen, much more so, when she recognized the face of the Count St. Julian,—not so

much altered by time, as misfortune. The happy party repaired to the dining parlour, each anxious to know the story of the others sufferings, but as all were eager to know of Adeline's detention, she was to relate her troubles first, but dinner being just served in, her narrative was suspended a short time till they had taken refreshment. She then began.—

CHAP. XX.

WHEN I quitted the shop of the embroiderer's, to return to M. de Barré's; as I crossed a street, two men advanced, and made numerous inquiries, to which I could return no answer. At the next street I came to stand a carriage, and without any suspicion, or if I had entertained any, I had not the power of releasing myself; I was lifted into it, and it instantly drove away.

Immediately, every terrific idea rushed on my imagination. I could think of nothing but the Count St. Julian, for who had I ever offended, and who else had I to fear.—Useless appeared every effort to inquire by whom I had been forced away, an obdurate silence prevailed, which it seemed impossible to break—and

you, my dear mother, may suppose what I suffered, during this painful period of doubt and distraction, which can never be effaced from my mind.

“ I perceived extreme caution had been taken to secure me, for we stopped at no inn, but in a bye field, a change of horses awaited our arrival, and provisions had been well supplied in the carriage. My sorrows increased, as I perceived the deprivation of every hope, for had we stopped at any inn, my simple heart had flattered me, I should raise friends to extricate me from the tyranny of my merciless persecutors.

“ During my journey, I was unlucky enough to drop the letter, I received from Alphonso in the morning, by taking out my handkerchief. One of my attendants took it up, and although I repeatedly entreated he would return it to me, yet he positively refused, and I was compelled

pelled to give up the point.—At that time I little suspected the evidence it would be against me.

“It was evening when we arrived at a castle, which I since learn, was the castle of St. Clair :—I was led through many apartments till I came to one very elegant, the furniture of it was uncommonly superb, which was mentioned to be the one allotted for my reception ;—there was a plentiful supply of every refreshment, with every luxury to indulge the senses and the appetite. One female servant attended ; but I imagined she was the vile instrument of a wicked master ;—and I must acknowledge, I treated her with a contempt that had ever before been foreign to my heart.

“The Count St. Julian did not appear, which gave me a temporary consolation ; but I knew not who had taken me away ;

and a fullen silence was all I could gain when I made any inquiries.

“ The change and choice of cloaths, some of which were superb to a degree, were then shewn to me, which proved my seizure to have been long in contemplation.

“ I took a biscuit and a little water for my supper, and telling my attendant I wanted rest, entreated her to depart ; for I could not reconcile myself to her staying in the room with me, as she informed me, she really must ; but when I insisted, she called another servant, who carried the message to his master, and the answer returned was,—“ they should comply with my request.”—She then left me.

“ Happy to obtain the solitary consolation of being alone, I gave a free vent to the afflictions of my heart, and every tormenting thought rushed on my fancy. I secured my door, so as to prevent the entrance

entrance of any one, and examined every corner, to discover, if possible, the means of escaping.—I opened the windows, and they looked into the garden, which was a great way below, and several servants were running back and forward to a room adjoining, which banished all hope of obtaining liberty that way; and every other was denied to the wretched Adeline!

“Weary with my journey, and oppressed with care, I thought of endeavouring to gain a temporary repose; for which purpose I threw myself on the bed in my cloaths,—and on the pillow discovered a paper, carefully folded, which excited alarm I am unable to describe. The contents were—

“Adeline de Belmont is not unknown to the Countess St. Julian, who, for her sake, has lost the affection of a husband never kind; but to whom she has been

a tender and faithful wife for fourteen years. Separated by his unkind will, and doomed to reside at the Chateau Bellevu. She trusts to Adeline's honour, in which she has hopes, and sincerely prays she may escape the snares laid for her, and begs Adeline to consider the Countess and her children as unfortunate as herself in their sufferings."

"I perused this note over and over again, and wondered how it could come there. My own sorrows lost some of their poignancy in considering the melancholy situation of the Countess; and as no angry sentiment was contained therein, I felt for her severely, as I imagined she must be possessed of an amiable heart.—These thoughts chased sleep from my eyes, and I did not obtain a short oblivion from care till late next morning.

"My attendant awakened me by knocking at the door, for me to take some breakfast;—

breakfast;—I readily accepted it:—she then delivered a letter from her master, requesting to know if he should wait on me in my room; or if I would honor him with my presence in the drawing-room—and it was signed St. Julian.—“St. Julian!” I exclaimed, “then it is St. Julian who seeks to destroy the peace of Adeline de Belmont;—I will attend him.”

“Will you not please to dress, Mademoiselle?” said my attendant, whose name was Agnes, “for the Count is remarkably fond of elegant dress, as you may perceive by the richness of the cloaths provided for you. I beg you will not think me rude when I say, I am sure he will be highly offended if you do not.”

“I looked with ineffible scorn on the hill of finery prepared for me, and said, “No, I will go as I am; for it does not

please *me* to wear what is not my own, and what I have no right to."

"I was conducted to his presence in the drawing-room, where he sat in a stile of grandeur hardly to be equalled. He first began—

"You have given me infinite pains, charming Adeline!—and when my sole wish was for your happiness and advantage, I think you might have treated my passion with more kindness than you have done."

"I cast an indignant look on him, and replied,—“You astonish me, when you say, *you wish for my happiness*, when every earthly happiness you have cruelly wrested from me, by tearing me from my friends against my will, and unwarrantably detaining me a prisoner.”

“A prisoner!” he replied, with a haughtiness his arts were not able to conceal; “if the love I bear you, and your refusal

refusal has induced me to take what may seem to you harsh measures, yet I think you ought not to stile yourself—a *prisoner*.”

“ And what other appellation can I give my present situation?—if I am not, why detain me here?”

“ Your resentment, Adeline, may at present carry you beyond the bounds of reason or prudence, but I forgive it, and you will soon have reason to change your opinion of me.—I shall embrace another opportunity of talking to you; you seem angry now, and my temper is rather irritable;—so if you please, you may retire.”

“ The gloomy brow of St. Julian was bursting with rage, and I dreaded the storm that was collecting there. I therefore quitted his presence, and was escorted to my own room, where Agnes waited to receive me.

“ Agnes

“ Agnes looked confused, and a solicitude appeared in her manner she could not conceal ; though she forbore making any inquiry,—yet I saw she was deeply affected.

“ My heart felt relieved by a flood of tears which Agnes was kind enough to let me indulge without interruption.—I esteemed her the more as she seemed to withhold insulting me, by offering consolation ;—for what consolation could I feel, debarred from the sight of all those I held dear on earth ?

“ When my grief a little abated, I asked her how a note came to be on my pillow last night from the Countess.

“ It was her desire, Mademoiselle.”

“ When did the Countess leave this place ?” I inquired.

“ About a week ago, Mademoiselle.”

“ Why then, Agnes, as the Countess has been gone so long, I think it impossible

fible to have been there ever since,—for it would certainly have been found.

“ Perhaps a friend put it there by her order,” said Agnes.

“ Has the Countess any friends here ?”

Agnes shook her head. “ The Countess has many that pity her, I believe.—She was a worthy woman ; and if the Count was not altogether so kind, there were few hearts in the castle but what felt for her.—Hark !—was not that the Count’s voice ?”

“ Why sure,” said I, “ you are not afraid he should hear your speak of the Countess.”

“ The Count,” replied Agnes, “ has been very harsh in his behaviour of late, and he don’t like to hear her name mentioned at all :—he has, indeed, forbid us to speak of her ;—he is a very odd man ; but servants, Mademoiselle, must hear and say nothing.—Yes, it is the Count.”

“ I was

“ I was uneasy lest he should come to my room ; but by good fortune, he did not ;—and some days elapsed without my seeing him. Agnes was rather reserved, and my mind was employed in thinking of the poor Countess and her children, my dear Madame de Belmont, and Alphonso ; for myself, I seemed to feel trivial, in comparison to what I endured for them.

“ In the course of the week I was again ordered to appear before the Count, who chid me for not using the dresses he had provided for me ; certainly, my own habit was dirty, but my appearance I very little regarded.—He held a letter in his hand, and asked who Alphonso de Semonville was ?

“ I was astonished at the question, but immediately recollected the letter I had dropped in the carriage, which no entreaties could prevail on the attendants to deliver up to me : and I also remembered it was expressive of kindness. He looked
angry,

angry, as I hesitated to reply; and haughtily commanded me to give him an explicit answer.

“It is the Baron de Semonville,” I replied; a nobleman, who I have the honor of being acquainted with, and my mother’s approbation to esteem.”

“Do you dare say this to me?” he angrily demanded.

“My Lord, you asked the question, and I judged it proper to give an explicit reply; why should I fear to speak the truth?—and I really do not understand what you mean by saying, *do I dare?*—for I do not consider myself bound to give *you* an account of my actions:—satisfied with the approbation of Madame de Belmont, I seek not to please any one else, for no other person has a right to command me.”

“Insolent!” replied St. Julian,—“the love of the Count St. Julian has a right to

to every pre-eminence, and know that I am very jealous of what I love; and cannot bear a rival, however mean and contemptible.

“Contemptible!”—said I, bursting with anger,—“the Baron de Semonville is neither; and as much superior to thee in honor and goodness, as thou art beneath him, in every respect.—The noble spirit of Alphonso would scorn the mean arts you have been guilty of in trepaning me;—nor can truth or generosity ever be expected from one, who, conscious of his own inferiority, could stoop to so wretched a subterfuge!”

“The Count looked amazed; but endeavouring to smooth his brow into an artful smile, said,—“My lovely girl, you seem to exert your raillery;—but frowns do not become you;—if you remember, I once told you you might have cause to repent,—

repent,—let me not say so again :—I think I made the daughter of a poor lace woman very generous offers ;—I will now double them, if you consent to be the mistress of my affections ;—I ask you, because I would have you believe I value your free consent :—but, if you still refuse, you are under my roof, and may have greater cause to repent.”

I replied, “ My Lord, you amaze me, when you say, *you value my free consent* !—recollect, you have confined me in your house ;—deprived me of my free will, and are endeavouring to extort that consent by the most arbitrary proceedings. The daughter of a *poor lace woman*, as you are pleased to stile me, despises those *generous offers* that have a tendency to dishonour !—My heart revolts at the idea of injustice to the Countess St. Julian ; and I am confident my sentiments can never, never alter .”

“ Why

“ Why should the Countess St. Julian intrude on your thoughts,—I have cast her from mine for ever.”—I started.—

“ Miserable woman !” exclaimed I,—“ but it is useless to say more—I never can be your’s, nor ever will, by forcing me from my friends, you cannot deprive them of my affections, and the longer you detain me, the greater will be my aversion towards you.”

“ I for this time forgive you, Adeline, but expect, after a night’s consideration, you will study your own interest better, for it is folly Adeline to contend with me.”

“ My lord, I beg to retire :—I find my heart offended—myself insulted, and if I continue longer, patience will not silently yield to the indignities your offer.—I then left the room.

“ Another week rolled away, in which I had nothing to complain of.—The Count
treated

treated me very respectfully, and never hinted any thing to grieve me *with these generous proposals*. I dined with him almost every day, his behaviour seemed quite changed, but my fears were no way diminished, for I judged the same sentiments must lurk in his heart, that had formerly been there, or why did he detain me—and when I asked to return to Madame de Belmont, he seemed to take a pleasure in the thought that he had divided us?

“ At length he renewed his offers, which should extend to any thing I wished to demand, and as he had too great an affection for me ever to part, if my objections rested on the Countess, his interest at court, and at Rome, would procure friends to obtain a divorce, and he boasted of enjoying such high favour from the monarch, that he could scarce ask any thing and be denied.

“ Never

“Never—never my lord,” replied I, “shall the Countess St. Julian be a sufferer by me,—never will my consent be obtained on any terms, my affections are unalterably fixed, and vain is every endeavour of your’s to change their course, and this I must declare, that if I am detained here for ever, my mind will still continue the same.”

“I hastened from the presence of the Count, whose anger seemed kindling in his eyes, which flashed their enraged beams, denouncing destruction. My own room was the place of my retirement, but that room was in his house, and every creature in it devoted to his interest; my hapless situation never appeared more formidable than the present, and I wept at the recollection of past felicity, which would never more return; when I have enjoyed liberty and serenity, without any alloy, with my dear and only friend, that
kind

kind protectress of my infancy and early years.—Oh! what a dreadful change!—now none of my friends could give me any assistance, as it was impossible for them to conjecture what was become of me. I had tried the means to write, but no one would convey it from the place, nor would any one acquaint me with the name of the Castle, or where it was situated; Agnes seemed to feel for my miserable situation, and the distress she saw ever labouring at my heart, but her abilities could only extend to pitying my misfortunes.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

MY misfortunes now seemed to have arrived at their crisis, for, accidentally, while weeping, I had drawn the small pocket-book which inclosed the miniature of my dear murdered mother, from my pocket, in hopes by looking thereon, to beguile myself of some of the afflictions which were ready to burst my heart.—You, madam, gave me that pocket-book, with a coat of arms in gold on the case, at Valenciennes, the night you intrusted me with the dreadful secret of my family, often have I vented my sorrows over that inanimate resemblance, and now my bosom swelling with anguish, I had taken it out to view her lovely face, and bedew it with the tears of affection, and unutterable distress—never before did the picture look
so

so charming, never did I feel such sensations as at that time, her heavenly blue eyes seemed to regard me with unusual tenderness:—I thought they expressed concern for me, and I sunk into a calm contemplation, without once observing the Count approach;—my senses were all absorbed in what I looked on. By ill chance he entered the room, for the first time; he appeared uncommonly angry;—but his attention was soon drawn to the pocket-book, on which he rivetted his eyes, as I was going to put it in my pocket.

“Let me see that book,” said he, peremptorily;—“It is none of your’s, my Lord,” I replied.

“It is better known to me than you imagine;—therefore, insist on your resigning it;”—and he advanced to take it from me. I struggled to save the book, for which I had a great esteem; as also in

opposition to his tyrannic will; but he wrenched it from my hand, and in endeavouring to save it, I let the picture fall.

Eagerly examining the arms on the book, he exclaimed,—“The arms of St. Julian!”—then opening it, read,—“Eloise Countess St. Julian!”—Rage darted from his eyes, and petrified me with fear, as he asked how I came by it?

“My mother gave it me,” I tremblingly replied,—“and she gave you this too,” said he, taking up the picture; but no sooner did he cast his eyes on it, than every nerve appeared convulsed;—his colour changed to a deadly paleness; his eyes started with wildness, and he looked on it with that horror as if it was a dragon going to devour him!—Terrific agonies apparently shook his soul, and prevented his speaking for some minutes, At length his natural anger and countenance returned, and he said, with scorn,

“You

“Your mother!—your mother!—deceitful wretch!—your arts are now discovered!—fool that I was to be blind so long;—every spark of affection is fled, and hatred and revenge succeeds.”

“Your hatred to me,” said I, “is far more preferable than the odious love you have so long boasted; and I glory in it.”

“Beware how you trifle with my rage; for by every blessed power I swear you shall not escape.”

“I never did your Lordship any ill, and why you should denounce vengeance on a hapless girl, whom your arts have rendered miserable, I cannot form a thought.”

“Read!—Read!”—said he, holding the book in his hand, which trembled with agony, and his face exhibited a variety of tortured passions,—“Do you see that name?”—then presenting the picture, “Do you see that face?”

“ I have read it over an hundred times; but what has that name or that face to do with the revenge you are pleased to threaten me with ?”

“ Poor Agnes stood trembling with fear, and crying, which the Count observing, he sprung towards her, and forcibly taking her arm, pushed her out of the door, and shut it against her; then turning to me, said,—“ You will contaminate my servants with you arts;—but I shall put a stop to this, now I have discovered you.—Madame de Belmont is not your mother.”

“ Not my mother!—you are vastly mistaken; I am proud to say she is, and that I never knew another.”

“ Traiteurs !” he exclaimed, and pushed me from him with violence,—“ wretch that thou art ! bitterly shall you suffer for this !”

“ For

“ For you to wrong me ;—and for me, a poor defenceless unfortunate, to be a sufferer, is the hard destiny cruel fate has allotted me !—and that I am in the hands of a wretch, devoid of the common feelings of humanity, of course your present treatment, and that received during a confinement of near three tedious weeks, I must be the best judge of.”

“ Oh !—you shall confess the whole truth of this business, or torments shall wring it from you !” said he, trembling with passion, “ that there exists a St. Julian, I can scarcely doubt !”—and he walked out of the room in a great rage, securing the door, and taking the key with him.

“ A melancholy interval of doubtful suspense succeeded before any one came to disturb me. I imagined he suspected my birth by the terror, that, spite of his rage, he could ill conceal ; and I expected

ed certain death would follow the discovery.

“ In about an hour the Count returned with a man whom he called De Courcy, and as he entered, his voice burst in horrible sounds,—“ Why do I hesitate ? She too nearly resembles Eloise St. Julian, for me to entertain a doubt, and this picture is an additional proof.” The shock my spirits received from the menaces, reproaches, and insulting speeches he made, took from me every power, and I fainted away, in which state I was conveyed to a miserable prison, wretchedly furnished, where I found myself, on my recovery, attended only by De Courcy.

“ A softened kind of pity, I thought seemed to beam in his countenance ; but I soon found he was too much the creature of his master to befriend me, so declined venting complaints or imploring assistance ;

assistance ; every idea that led that way, was a fruitless one :—he left me ;—and in a state of misery I past the hours, till the dusk of evening induced them to bring me a lamp.

“ My apartment I had examined, it was of stone, and apparently was situated near the top of the building, as only the tops of trees played before my prison window, which was small, and secured with iron bars, so close together as not to suffer my hand to pass through.

“ My food, from the luxuries I before had been supplied with, was now strangely altered ; for a scanty allowance of bread and water was all my support ; and at times, I received messages from the Count, that I ought to bless his lenity in suffering such a wretch as me to live.

“ One day I was much surprised and distressed to find, on removing an old picture, which apparently had remained

there for years, a piece of paper doubled up, and almost covered with dust;—I have preserved it ever since;—but being written with a pencil, some part is nearly effaced.—

“Victor Count St. Julian, torn from all he held dear on earth, conveyed by the abominable arts of a villain, to this abode of wretchedness, now lingers out a miserable existence, unknown, awaiting the friendly hand of death to put a final period to his sufferings!—Whoever sees these lines, pity his hapless destiny, and drop a tear for his misfortunes!—

“Ah! that I will, my father!”—I exclaimed, “I will weep for thy sufferings, till the fountains of my eyes are dry!—thy wretched daughter, a victim to the same cruel tyrant that deprived thee of liberty and life, will, while life remains, mourn our mutual woes!—there wanted not this addition to my miseries, my own
was

was sufficient ; but I bow beneath the pressure of accumulated ills !—Oh ! my ill-fated parents ! Let thy gentle spirits hover over thy wretched Adeline, who will soon join thee,—his cruelty reaches not beyond the grave.”

“ Such were my daily complaints, and each succeeding day added to my griefs, till my mind, I feared, became as enfeebled as my body, for my health was greatly impaired, and my excess of sorrow, reduced me to a shadow. The first time this fear assailed me, was after I had been confined there near a week, I had been very ill during the day, and my grief had been extreme :—in the evening I sunk down on my bed, to gain a short respite from unavailing sorrow. About midnight, I awoke, for the clock of the Castle immediately struck twelve ; as I opened my eyes, I beheld a lady as I thought, walking too and fro in my prison, I raised myself

self to observe her more particularly, and fancied it might be the Countess, but instant recollection told me she was far from thence, and it was impossible to be her. Yet I had never seen any person in the Castle that in the least resembled the person now before me.

“ After walking backward and forward several times, without speaking, she seemed to go out at the door. Fear of I know not what kept me silent, but I now started from my bed, and flew to the door to follow her, but it was as usual strongly secured. I was at a loss to know what to make of this strange visit, and the thought kept me waking. I also feared to make any inquiries in the morning when De Courcy brought my provisions, lest if any person should be inclined to pity and serve me in the Castle, my mentioning the above circumstance might frustrate all.

“ The

“ The day passed on heavily, and I could not extricate my thoughts from the mysterious visit I had received the preceding night. I did not retire to bed at my usual hour, but sat observing the moon play through the tops of the tall trees, and the battlements of the Castle in at my window, this was a melancholy consolation, but it suited the sadness of my mind, and I had no other.

“ The hour of midnight approached, and the clock struck twelve,—on the instant, I turned my head, and observed the same figure, I had seen the night before, walking in my prison;—it startled me, but heeded me not, and continued walking the same solemn pace.—Fear riveted me to the spot, and I shuddered without knowing why.—Still it moved on, with the same serious, yet majestic air—and my eye followed in dreadful anxiety. I thought it the error of my weak brain,

enervated by the misfortunes I had endured. At last, trembling and fearful, I made a violent effort to run to the door, hoping to find it open—but alas ! it resisted my utmost strength.—I then turned timorously round, and the vision met my eyes, whose flowing garments were spotted with blood, and a dreadful wound appeared on the breast ; the sight overcame me—I shrieked—and fell senseless on the ground.

“ When I recovered, I recalled all these strange things to my mind, and still was inclined to think my senses erred. Next day, I dreaded the approach of night, lest I should see the spectre again ; and so it happened, for the moment the clock struck twelve, the midnight wanderer was here to be there.—Thus passed my nights, and being accustomed to the appearance I began less to fear. In a short time, I used to expect it, and derived a melancholy

choly consolation from the thought of seeing this only silent companion of my solitary confinement.

“ Thus past a miserable fortnight in dread suspense, and uncertainty of what was to befall me, and each hour, as it moved away upon the leaden wings of time, added to my afflictions.—At the expiration, I was much surprised to see De Courcy enter, and lay a paper before me, he looked unusually collected, and retired without speaking: wondering what could be the meaning of so strange a proceeding, I took it to resolve my doubts, and to my great amazement, read the following:—

“ The Count declares you are an impostor; he has resolved on your death; but he will force a declaration from you, to know if you are not the daughter of the late Count St. Julian? in the course of four or five days, you will receive sentence,

tence, and death is to follow immediately. I did not wish it should surprise you un-awares, make your peace with God, and be resigned."

"I read this fatal decree over and over again, doubting the reality, and could have worshipped De Courcy for his kindness in giving me the information. When he brought my provisions, I fell at his feet, and begged he would declare to me how and why I should suffer? He looked affected, but made no reply, and burst from me, leaving me extended on the floor.

"My misery I cannot describe, for hope had fled from my breast, and every horror encompassed me; death had charms, compared to what I endured; but the thought of losing life, in a private manner, unknown to my dear Madame de Belmont, was worse than any thing I could experience; I judged what must be her sufferings

ferings at my final loss. The state of doubt and anxiety she must endure at hearing nothing of what was become of me, in like manner to the mention she had repeatedly made of my father's mysterious loss. I now sincerely believed he had been privately put to death in that place of horrors, and fancied I should add to the guilt of St. Julian.

"The day passed away in dread anxiety, and night was far advanced. I had thrown myself on the bed, giving vent to the anguish of my mind, and anticipating what would happen in a few days.—It wanted about a quarter of an hour of midnight.—I thought I heard foot steps near the door, which alarmed me.—"Merciful God?" exclaimed I, rising on my knees, "am I to suffer at this dread hour of night!—Nothing but to be led to death, could bring any one at an hour so unusual."—Oh! what terrific sensations

sensations rushed through every vein.—The door was unbarred, and opened, and a stranger of a remorseless aspect entered, and bade me rise and follow. The sound struck like a dagger to my heart, I covered my face with my hand, and wept in agony, unable to reply, till the harsh voice of the man, again repeated, “arise and follow,” which roused every faculty. I lifted my eyes and hands to heaven, and fervently implored its aid, and resigning myself to my conductor,—silently followed him.

“I was surprised to find we descended a steep spiral stair-case, but recollected that when I was conveyed to my prison, I was ill, and knew not which way we went;—but I followed, and at the foot of the stairs came to a gallery, there I looked around me, but in vain, for no relief appeared. We past into a large place that seemed to resemble a chapel;—as we
entered

entered the chapel, the Castle clock struck twelve, and the spectre moved across as we walked.—My conductor started back, and drew one hand over his eyes, while the other eagerly grasped his sword.—Again it passed, and pointed to the opposite side, but I could not comprehend what was meant.

“Once more it thwarted our way before we reached the opposite door, and the man started at each appearance, but when we had passed the chapel, he seemed to regain courage.

We then went along another gallery, and ascended a flight of stairs, which brought us to a part of the Castle I well remembered, when, turning to the right, my conductor stopped, and opening a door, waited while I entered, and then shut it and retired.

“Great was my terror when I found myself in the bed chamber of some person,

son, though I did not imagine it was the Count's. A deep sigh drew my attention, which much startled me, and deprived me of the power of moving from the place.

"A voice then spoke in a faltering accent, and demanded my approach:—tremblingly I advanced; the curtain was raised, and by the light of a lamp, I discovered the features of De Courcy; but I thought considerably altered since I saw him at noon, and he appeared extremely ill, his groans pierced my heart, and some minutes elapsed before he could utter;—" Sit down, Adeline, and attend to me."

"I took a seat and drew near him; he said, "The time is now fast approaching, that I may not be able to make the confession my heart inclines me to give you. I have this day been seized with a dreadful sickness, which I have not the hope of getting the better of. I feel as if the
hand

hand of death had fallen on me; therefore, if the acknowledgment of my former crimes can be of any service to you, —if you are as is believed the daughter of the late Count St. Julian, let me, by doing justice to you, atone for the errors of an ill-spent life, which, if strength permits me, I will do most faithfully.

“ The Count, this day, after determining your death, set out for Paris, where he will remain about a fortnight on very particular business.—In the interim, your fate is to be decided as I shall hereafter inform you, as also of the business that now calls him away—listen with attention, and believe me sincere.

“ In my early years, I, an only son, had been born to a plentiful fortune, but my education had been much neglected, from the mistaken affection of my father, who let me act uncontrouled, and by being the idol of his advanced age, my
conduct

conduct and principles were totally disregarded, but let me not blame the indulgence of an aged and affectionate parent, my own age ought to have been a better monitor. At his death, being very gay, I associated myself with gamblers, in which baneful amusement, I found every pleasure till, by degrees, loss succeeded loss, and a run of ill luck deprived me of the whole of my inheritance. In this situation, and at one of those meetings, I first became acquainted with the Count St. Julian, then M. Delarsonne, who squandered away great part of his fortune at play, to the great grief of his father.

“ My fortunes became desperate, and I had no means of extricating myself from the difficulties that surrounded me, but by servitude, which offer M. Delarsonne made me, expressing a regard for my abilities; and not knowing what else to do, I engaged myself as his servant.

“ I

“ I soon became his favourite ; a familiarity of manners soon gained me his confidence. His father died, and when he came to the estate, it only increased his wish for play, whereby he met with great losses. This eagerness for play, I believe was the source of every succeeding vice : he grew fullen, and for months seemed quite altered ;—but at last broke the thoughts that lay at his breast to me.

“ De Courcy,” said he, “ I believe you faithful ; my affairs are driven to the last extremity, and there remains but one desperate way of extricating myself ; I have had many scruples, but they are now all vanished.—I am heir at law to a noble title and estate :—I had fondly flattered myself, that as the present possessor was of a sickly constitution, he would not live to attain the age of twenty-one ;—but he has, and is married ; and to frustrate my hopes, he has a son, now a year and a half

half old, which totally distances every expectation, as there is now another heir to the estate, who is the idol of his parents. I have been considering of the possibility of having this obstacle removed, if I could find a friend whose scruples were not too nice."

"I rather hesitated:—but he said,—“if a weak gate stood in my way, that I could put down with ease, should I not be foolish to let it stand, and at the same time be obliged to go round a great way to my disadvantage?”—“Certainly,” I replied; “but why so strange a question?—what a comparison.”

“It is my way of reasoning,” said he, smiling,—“will you remove this barrier to my fortune; if so, I will give you one thousand pounds immediately; and whatever you can reasonably wish, in future, ask, and you shall have.”

“I

“ I am sorry to say, the thought of once more making a figure in the world, was my darling wish :—ambitious of that, I felt no secret monitor within to upbraid me with acting wrong.—A thousand pounds had many charms, and I thought would silence conscience ; for how many pleasures would a thousand pounds procure, of which I now felt the want ? I took a night to consider, and by morning every scruple was silenced ; and M. Delarsonne rejoiced to think one barrier could be removed.

“ The plot was then planned, which was, that another person should attend me, of whose confidence he had not a doubt, nor of the will to serve him.—We were to proceed, one evening, to the Chateau Bellevue, which was the residence of the Count St. Julian, and to await the appearance of a woman and child, whom he learnt went out every evening

evening for a walk. Of her we were to make some inquiries, and to endeavour, without seeming, to know if that child was the son of the Count.—If this succeeded, and we could engage her in conversation to walk so far from the Chateau as to reach the rivulet, which was at a short distance, we were to push her in.—If that did not succeed, other means were to be tried, so that the son of St. Julian did not return.”

“ I was fearful of interrupting him, lest the horror my heart would have expressed at what it felt, might have hindered me from knowing the whole of the black confession. De Courey continued—

“ Agreeable to our most fervent hopes, the nurse appeared with the child; we allowed her to proceed some way before we overtook her, and fortune, to favour us, led her towards the rivulet.—We soon followed

followed, and joined in conversation;—the child proved to be the son of the Count.—When near the rivulet, my companion and I began to dispute, but not unfriendly, and he jesting and boasting in his strength, and how he could conquer me, we closed, and running with force against the woman, she, with the child, were precipitated headlong into the water, and as no assistance was given, they soon perished!”

CHAP. XXII.

“WE returned to M. Delarsonne, who was overjoyed at our success, and received the reward of our enterprize, which, as I imagined the impossibility of a discovery, and that it could be laid to accident, my mind was soon composed; and the money then so coveted, had charms to dispel every intrusive idea.—M. Delarsonne *then* wished me to appear more like a gentleman and companion, which honor I soon enjoyed, and I soon became his entire confident.

“Yet his mind was not easy, and he would frequently say,—‘O! De Courcy, our work is but half finished!’—On his brow still sat the sullen gloom of care, which nought could dispel, and he again took to musing, and would often call me to consult, but has then declined.

“Several

“Several weeks after, he said, ‘I have fixed on a few men, who are willing to serve me, your concurrence I am certain of, as you assisted me in the removal of one disagreeable obstacle, you of course will be instrumental to that of another.—The reward shall be the same.—I must have the Count St. Julian brought here to-morrow night.’

“To-morrow night!” said I, “the time is rather sudden—but must it be to-morrow night?”

“I cannot permit an hour’s delay.”

“May I be permitted to ask your intentions?”

“I have not yet resolved, but when he is here, shall determine. I find he loves to walk by night—be it your care to conduct him here, there is a private door that leads up to the first gallery, it is unknown to any but me and yourself, he can be brought up there, and conveyed to the

tower without any creature in the Castle's being acquainted with it ; and when properly secured, let the men that assist you go out the same way, that the family may not be alarmed—I shall be earlier than usual in bed, and shall take care no one shall be up to be any impediment to your proceedings.—I consented.”—When the mind is once advanced in guilt, how easy every ill action seems to accomplish, and how gradually we move from one step to another, without feeling for its consequences.

“ I set out accordingly, and at a place appointed met my assistants—the one who had been my former companion, and three others. It was dark when we met the man we supposed was the Count, and inquiring his name, found we were not mistaken.—He was immediately bound, though he made a strong resistance, and was conveyed here by means of a chaise, brought

brought by one of them who drove it.— It stopped a short distance from the secret entrance to this Castle, and by the help of a torch, we were enabled to proceed, and soon gained the tower unobserved, where he was secured. I then conducted them safe back the way they came, and silence reigned throughout the Castle.

“ I then repaired to M. Delarsonne's chamber, and made my report to him,— he was elated at our success, and ordered that the prisoner should be confided to my care, till he thought proper to have him disposed of; of which he must take time to consider.

“ The unfortunate Count was confined about three weeks, when M. Delarsonne went to pay a visit to the Countess. But I cannot express his surprize and vexation when he returned, and declared to me, that he feared his business was not yet accomplished, for the Countess seemed near
G 3 lying

lying in, which would be another impediment to his fortunes. This circumstance appeared a great grief to him, and when I left him at night, he was greatly disturbed.

“ But when I waited on him in the morning, “ De Courcy,” said he, “ I have overcome this new difficulty :—I have thought of declaring the Count a traitor,—his absence will give a colour to the guilt I mean to charge him with—I have hinted he was such to the Countess, and through my interest at court, (as you know I am in favour with His Majesty,) I can be able to procure a warrant to seize on his effects, and such as remain of his family. I then will appeal to the King, who will be induced, as I am the heir, to consign the estates and title to me, and as St. Julian knows not by whom he is taken, or where he is, it will be in our power to convey him out of the Castle,
the

the same way he was brought in,—take him to the Bastille, where he will suffer by the hands of the law, and I shall appear quite innocent of the business;—do you approve of the scheme?—for die he must, and by resigning him up to the laws of his country, we take his blood the more immediately off our hands, for if he suffers by the law, it will carry a resemblance of justice.

“ I did not hesitate to approve of the project; in the course of the week, he procured a warrant, and a number of his friends and people were employed, with the assistance of some armed soldiers, to enter the Chateau Bellevue, by force if necessary, and to seize the effects, which plan was put in execution, about four days after.—

“ We accordingly went to the Chateau of the Count St. Julian—access was easily gained, and the soldiers believing it a

real seizure, began to destroy many valuable articles, which M. Delarfonne would gladly have spared for his own sake.

“ The Countess was brought to bed—he bid me follow, and we rushed into the chamber, and instantly demanded the child. The Countess said it was dead.—His rage encreased at the disappointment, and in a furious tone, he called for the child, dead or alive.

“ A female attendant now advanced, and begged he would not disturb her lady, and assured us the child was dead. Passion and disappointment redoubled his impetuosity,—he raved—he cursed the Countess and her arts that wished to deprive him of his rights.—The woman interceded, and intreated he would spare those bitter reproaches, as the Countess was too ill to bear them. He struck her a violent blow for daring to interrupt him,
and

and she fell to the ground: then approaching the Countess, he vented every cruel expression his frenzy could suggest.

“Wretch that thou art!” exclaimed the Countess, “thou hast murdered my child and husband, and art come to be the death of me!—but the Almighty will not suffer my wrongs to go unpunished! you will feel it in this world, Delarsonne, and vengeance in that to come!”

“Enraged to the greatest excess, he drew his dagger, and plunged it with violence into the breast of the Countess, enjoying the satisfaction of seeing her draw her last breath, and witnessed, with a savage joy, her convulsive agonies!—then left the room, and I followed.

“We then sought every place we could think of, in hopes to find the child; for no one could persuade him, but that it was concealed.—It proved, however, a fruitless search, and we quitted the Cha-

teau Bellevue without obtaining the final object.

“ In a few days after he went to Paris, to intreat the King would not suffer his rights to be forfeited for his kinsman’s crimes, which request was immediately granted.

“ But a new misfortune arose, which poisoned every enjoyment, for the Countess’s dying threat was soon perceived :—on that very night her spirit wandered through the castle, and has continued to do so ever since.—When first it was mentioned to the Count, (for such now was his title,) that the figure of a lady haunted the place, and the dread each who saw it felt, he was not able to command his passion, and threatened vengeance if any one dared to utter such a tale in future ; his threats silenced the domestics ; but he could not chace the spectre from his own eyes and conscience ; it was his constant

stant companion, as a thousand times he has assured me,—that both in public and in private, it was ever present.

“ I still continued to have charge of the deposed Count ; and during the new Count’s absence to examine the vast estates he now was possessed of, I was to deliver him up a victim to the laws, and to the Bastille.—This I was to have done, and certainly should, but for an incident of a very extraordinary nature, which I never could account for.

“ One evening, I had been drinking rather freely, occasioned by the hilarity and mirth that was pleasantly circulated at a grand route, given by the Count, to a very numerous company, on the acquisition of his new title and estates. In the midst of this mirth and jollity, I neglected to carry the prisoner his lamp, and did not recollect it till it had greatly exceeded the usual hour. However, I took

it him;—but unluckily, on my return, I imagine I forgot to secure the door, for by no other means could it have happened.

“The Count set out next morning on his intended tour, to visit and take possession of those estates that came to him with his new title; and the charge of every thing was given to me during his absence.

“In the morning, when I went to carry the prisoner his provisions for the day, how great was my astonishment to find the doors open, and the person gone! I examined every part, but wholly unable to discover by what means he had escaped, as every place in that wing of the castle was strongly secured, and had been so a considerable time: therefore, if he had gone out that way, I was certain I must find some place open: I sought, but sought in vain,—for I could find no trace whatever

ever of him.—His confinement was a secret to the whole family; and I could make no inquiry, lest it might fill their heads with strange conjectures:—but after making every examination in my power, I thought I would ask if the doors of the castle had been secured over night, as my being rather incbriated, made me forget to look.

“ The servants assured me, that every part was, as usual, secured, when they came down in the morning.—This assertion brought to my recollection, the secret door, of which no one had any knowledge but the Count and myself.—But then I considered it an utter impossibility for him to escape that way, as it must be a person well acquainted with the springs and the nature of securing the door afterwards. However, I determined to look there, lest by any strange accident the discovery had been made. I passed the
door,

door, and continued through the subterraneous passages, till I reached the outlet of the castle, and there I found the door strongly fastened, as I left it the night I let the men out, after having brought and secured him in the tower ; so thought could not trace him that way.

“ The mystery of his loss was a great trouble to me ;—for I could not frame an idea of what I should say to the Count, as I could not tell him I had delivered him up to the Bastille, for then it would be known. I thought, if there was a possibility of enchantment, he must have been taken away by supernatural aid.—If I acknowledged his loss, I know it would cost me my life, so I formed a project that allowed me a temporary relief, and trusted to the event. I obtained a coffin, and had it conveyed to the secret door by one of those who had assisted me on the former occasion, so that if he saw the Count,

his

his relating bringing me the coffin, would have some weight if he entertained any suspicion.

“ The coffin was brought to the door, from whence I carried it, and dug a hole in one of the vaults of the castle :—I then deposited the coffin, with the intent to declare he was dead ;—and though I lived in constant dread and expectation of his appearance, yet I thought it would allow me a short respite, and give me the means of flight if he should come to claim his rights, which I hourly expected.

“ When the Count returned, I told him of the prisoner’s death, and shewed the new-made grave, with which he seemed satisfied :—but my mind was in constant alarms, for I every day expected his return.—The dread of discovery destroyed my peace ;—but, strange to tell, he never since has been heard of ; and
that

that is now between eighteen and nineteen years ago."

"De Courcy seemed nearly exhausted by speaking so much; and I feared I should not be able to learn the whole of what he meant to tell me, as he said he had a deal more to say.—I need not express what were my feelings on hearing the melancholy confirmation of the death of the Countess; and that she died by the merciless hand of my tyrant!—but I blessed God that my father had escaped—though his fate was very doubtful, as so long a space of time had elapsed without knowing what was become of him.

"I then entreated, as he had been so kind to give me this information, his kindness would extend so far to allow me liberty to write to my friends, and let them know where I was detained;—and as I was ignorant where I was, if he would be so good to tell me.

"Do

“ Do you not know ?” said he, “ that you are at the Castle of St. Clair, near Perpignan, in the province of Roussillon ?”

“ I really did not know I was,” I replied.

“ I will consider,” said he, “ what you ask ;—if I live to see you again, as I have not now the means.—Now retire to your prison, and when I send for you attend.”

“ He then rung a bell, and in a few seconds the man entered who had brought me there.—I bade him good night, or rather morning, and the man escorted me back to my dreary dwelling and secured the doors.

“ The morning was breaking in the east ; the birds began to salute the sun, as he rose in beautiful majesty over the tall trees that were waving by the agitation of a gentle breeze before my window, and its lovely rays penetrated, and cheered the solitude of my prison.—Sleep to my eyes was
a stranger,

a stranger, for every word of De Courcy's had made a deep impresson on my mind. I feared his sincerity, or why could he not point out to me the means of escape, if he really had a wish to serve me?—and why seem to hesitate that I should write to my friends, when every moment was pregnant with danger, as he had let me know my death was fixed on to be in a few days.—O! I could not reconcile those astonishing contradictions!—for if it pleased God he should not live, of what use was his confession to me?—I feared he was too much the creature of a wicked master, and that the dread of death alone had extorted this narrative from him.—He had mentioned the secret door, and the difficulty of finding the springs. I would have given worlds to know where that door was situated;—but the castle was very large, and I knew not what part to seek it in.

“ These

“These thoughts kept me waking, and I did not experience the blessing of sleep till late in the morning; and when I awoke, how impatient was I to be conducted again to De Courcy, which did not happen till nine o'clock at night.”

CHAP. XXIII.

"WHEN I entered his apartment, he was visibly altered for the worse, but he said, 'I have not forgot you, Adeline: there is the paper and the instruments for writing, but alas!—I fear it will be of little use, I have not closed my eyes since last we parted, now I feel inclined to sleep, and therefore cannot conclude what I have to say to you to-night; after you retire, write your letter, and direct it where it shall be sent, at six o'clock in the morning I will send for you, and will give your letter as one of mine to a person, who I give you my word, shall faithfully deliver it. But in case of any accident, say as little as you can help, only letting them know where you are.'

" I

“I thanked him profusely for his kindness, and wishing him good repose, retired with the man, who came for me, carefully concealing my materials for writing.

For the first time, I felt a dawn of comfort in my solitude, yet disappointed in not hearing De Courcy's relation, which so materially concerned me. I sat down to write, but was never at such a loss in my life, and at times absolutely doubted the reality. How ardently I wished for six o'clock—how tedious—how lingering rolled the hours. At last it struck, and faithful to the moment, my door unclosed, and again I was led to De Courcy, to whom I gave my letter, directed for Madame de Belmont, but as I could not suppose any one would be able to find out our retreat in the forest, I took the liberty of sending it to the Baron

ron de Semonville's, who I imagined would receive and convey any thing to her.

“ I had not waited long, before a stranger arrived, to whom De Courcy gave my letter, saying it was to a friend of his, whom he much wished to see, and to be as expeditious as possible.

“ I never felt a greater satisfaction in my whole life, than when I saw him depart, nor could I harbour a doubt, but that the messenger would safely deliver it.

“ De Courcy continued extremely ill ; inasmuch that I feared, I should not hear the conclusion of his dreadful story ; but after having breakfasted, of which I partook, he proceeded.—

“ The Count never entertained a thought, but that his opponent was dead, as he enjoyed the vast estates uninterruptedly. But yet the vision of the murdered Eloise haunted him every where, as he has often declared to me. The Chateau Bellevue,

Bellevue, his villa in Picardy—the late Count's seat at Lyons, and every place, where to amuse his mind, he has retired to, yet no place had a barrier sufficient to exclude the fleeting form of Eloise.

“ About five years after he came to these possessions, he married a rich heiress of a very noble family, who brought him an immense fortune. But he soon hated his lady, and the children; a son, and two beautiful daughters, instead of being a comfort and making him happy, seemed his greatest affliction.—Still in his private hours he would fancy himself not secure, for he always thought there existed a St. Julian, that sooner or later would rise to oppose him, and often has asked, if I really believed *that* family was extinct.—If I said yes, he would positively affirm it was not so, and conjure up ideas to torment himself with.

“ Ever

“ Ever since he saw you at Valenciennes, he has more particularly disliked the Countess—and as soon as he discovered your going to La Salvetat, he banished her and family to the Chateau Bellevue.

“ When first you came here he flattered himself the display of vast riches would be an inducement for you to love him, and his disappointment was severe to a mind haughty and arbitrary as his is. But the picture and pocket-book with the arms and name of the Countess, St. Julian, drove him to madness.—Ever susceptible of the idea that some one of that family existed, his frantic soul did not hesitate to declare *you that* Count’s daughter.

“ This caused your confinement.—Another powerful passion instigated him; jealous to excess, he dreaded the preference you might give to the Baron de Semonville—and as a rival in either love, ambition, or fortune he never could bear; he studied

to

to get him removed—Learning that the Baron de Semonville was at Paris, he sent express to a nephew of his, a director of the monastery of Dominicians at Loudun, to have him seized and detained, that so he might be put for ever out of the power of being united to you.

“ Another powerful incentive immediately followed—the pocket book, and the thought that you being daughter to the late Count St. Julian—should you marry Alphonso it would give him a legal claim to demand your rights—This made him resolve on the final seclusion of the Baron de Semonville, who was to choose either death or a monastic life, and I can assure you his sufferings have been cruelly severe.”

I uttered a shriek, and clasping my hands in an agony of despair, could not help exclaiming against the wretch's villainy, in suffering his cruel hatred and abominable

arts to extend to an innocent man, who had never wronged him, and mourned the fate of the unfortunate Alphonso, who, for my sake, endured such miseries: in the generosity of Alphonso rested my only hope, of what avail now was my letter, when he was deprived of the power of granting me any assistance,—alas! unhappy young man, he himself wanted most powerful aid, to extricate himself from the snares of a wretch, whose unfeeling, unrelenting soul, cruelly thirsted for revenge.—I begged De Courcy to proceed.

“A few days ago,” continued De Courcy, “he received information that harrowed up his very soul—it was, that the Baron de Semonville had found means to escape from the dungeon to which he had been sentenced till he fixed his choice—enraged that he should elude his vengeance, and fearful of not securing him
again,

again, as also apprehensive that it might be suspected where you are confined; to entirely defeat the hopes of the Baron, he has condemned you to die—die by my hand, which deed is to be executed before he returns, and that will be in a few days, for yesterday I received a letter from him, wherein he mentions, he shall not stay there so long as he first proposed.

“Yet more remains,—Madame de Belmont he is certain is in the secret, and fearful she may make mention of what she knows, and declare you a daughter of the late Count’s, diligent search is to be made for her, he will have her confined in a prison, from which place, she may expect no release but by death.”

“De Courcy having concluded the narrative of my miserable affairs, I thanked him for his kindness in obliging me with the real situation of my friends, and my melancholy expectations, but he seemed

to propose no means of saving me from the dreadful blow that awaited.—Of what use was the knowledge of my extent of misery, without I could form the means of extricating myself from the danger?—The day passed away, and he entreated I would not leave him yet. I sat till twelve o'clock at midnight struck, and he wished me then to go, but that I would attend him early in the morning.—He asked me if I could find my way, as the man was absent who always came for me, and he did not wish any other should know of my being there, I said, I believed I could, so taking up a lamp, I bade him good-night, and that I would come agreeable to his request on the morrow.

“ As I passed through the chapel, I was strangely surprised to find a man, walking there—looking more minutely, I recollected him to be one of the servants I had formerly seen at Alphonso's house,

house, (when I accompanied you, madam, there on a visit.) He approached, and made himself known to me.—My fluttering heart could scarce credit the assertion that Alphonso was near, and they were forming a plan for releasing me, and named the following night.

“ The all-cheering rays of hope, once more animated my bosom, and I flattered myself it would not be difficult for me to meet him in the chapel at the hour he appointed. He named the knowledge he had of the secret door, and believed there remained not a doubt of success, if I could any how, contrive to meet him, and he would convey me safe to his master. I did not hesitate to promise, for I perceived De Courcy did not wish any of the servants should know I was there, and I did not fear being discovered by them, for as the wandering spirit of my dear fainted mother was every night seen, and every

one wished to avoid the part most frequented,—I did not expect any intrusion from them—yet I felt otherwise; for no sooner had De Courcy declared this melancholy truth, than I longed to see her again.

“ After promising to meet Euface, he left me, and in an instant disappeared, all my hopes now were, that the man who used to fetch me from my prison, would not return, so that I could be enabled to go back on the morrow night alone. Being now unattended, I walked about the chapel—Euface had mentioned the secret door:—Ah! how anxiously did I wish to discover it, lest any impediment should intervene to frustrate their endeavours, that, by its means, I might escape. Vain was every effort, and hopeless I relinquished every idea of succeeding myself.

“ I re-

“ I retired towards my melancholy prison, resigning myself to the will of providence, and to the endeavours of Alphonso and Eustace.

“ I had but just passed the chapel, and entered the gallery leading to my prison, when the spectre of Eloise stood before me.—A settled composure seemed to play round my heart at sight of her, I never before saw her with such pleasure as the present.—She stood still, and gazed wishfully on me. I held up my lamp to observe her more particularly; her countenance was extremely beautiful, but of a deadly paleness.—“ O ! blessed spirit of my murdered mother !” exclaimed I, “ is Adeline still dear to you ? Still art thou watchful over her sorrows, even in that prison, where the destroyer of my family has confined me ;—what thanks I owe thee !” —She laid her hand on her breast, seemingly expressive of the tenderness she
H 4 felt,

felt, and retreated a few paces from me. I fell on my knees, and earnestly implored her stay, but the fleeting form vanished into air. I continued some time on my knees, fervently praying of the almighty, the protection my hapless state required, and begged a safe deliverance from the villainous contrivances and designs of the wicked St. Julian. My heart felt relieved of some of its cares, and I arose and went to my prison, trusting in providence for succour.

“ The night was a tedious one, I thought I had never remembered one so long :— I counted the slow paced moments, whose progress seemed unusually retarded.— Time will never keep pace with impatience,—anxiety presents a thousand doubts and fears.—What various ideas floated in my mind !—Alphonso so near, with the generous intent of freeing me from confinement, and the machinations of a dangerous

gerous enemy.—Alas ! he knew not that it was rescuing me from death ; I forbore to wound your tender feelings, by a declaration of the threatened danger, and the joy of seeing Eustace, deprived me of the cruel recollection till after he had left me.

“ Busy thought succeeded thought, I sometimes flattered myself we should escape ;—then, fancy, ever susceptible of alarms, and always ready to present difficulties, urged we were discovered, and my mind on a sudden became depressed and melancholy ; alternately I thought myself superlatively happy, and then felt the quick transition to despair.—I could not close my eyes during the night, for various conjectures filled my mind, and deprived me of every expectation of repose, and I anxiously awaited the hour that I could visit De Courcy.

“ When the hour of seven had arrived, I left my abode to go to him,—he was apparently worse. I entreated he would send for some of his friends, and have proper assistance, as I feared his case required every attention ;—but he positively refused, declaring, he did not wish to recover, for after what he had said, death every way was the prospect, whether by indisposition, by the will of the Count, or by the law, as he had confessed himself an assistant in the murder of the Count’s son and nurse, as also an accomplice in his master’s crimes.

“ I sat with him during the day, bestowing him every attention in my power, and as I really feared he would not live, urged him to repent, and put his trust in that supreme being who knows the hearts of all, and who would accept the sincere contrition of a being so depraved, as he had confessed himself. He apparently
was

was much shocked at the retrospect of his life, but did not seem to entertain much hopes of pardon ;—and when I urged him, he seemed rather vexed, and said, “ how easy it is for the innocent to talk !—O may your bosom never experience the smallest pang, that now rends mine.”

“ Great as had been his crimes, and much as he had assisted to wrong my family, I could not help feeling for his situation—he had now no one to pity, or speak comfort to him, but *me*—he was sensible of it, and thanked me for my care, with the greatest earnestness.

“ I grew impatient as night advanced, and dreaded lest I should not be permitted to return alone—it was half an hour past eleven—I rose to bid him good night, and he said—“ This night I must consider and come to some determination concerning you. If the Count should return, and find his orders not obeyed, I

know the consequence; when I see you to-morrow, I may be able to bring my thoughts to a conclusion—there now remains but one day, Adeline, between you and fate—hope for the best, but do not forget to expect the worst.—Good night.”

“ I again wished him good night, and suddenly left the room, anxious to be punctual to my appointment in the chapel; and his mysterious words struck my heart with awe—“ *To hope for the best, but not to forget to expect the worst.*” What hidden mystery was couched beneath these ambiguous words—I certainly thought, he still had my death in contemplation, and the thought urged me the more effectually to seek my safety by flight.—Animated by that thought, I darted forward into the chapel; but my heart sickened as I reached the centre, and looking round saw no one but myself—no Eustace appeared to welcome me. I fancied he had been discovered,

vered, and every hope of liberty vanished from my eyes. My sensations were cruelly oppressive—the lamp which I brought with me from De Courcy's room, to light me, trembled in my hand; fearfully I gazed on every object round me—the marble pillars—the statues—the altar—silent as death was every thing—no sound disturbed the awful stillness which made me wild with apprehension—Eustace had been discovered!—all was lost!—I could conjecture nothing else. Lost in a maze of perturbed ideas, I perceived not the approach of Eustace, till a voice on my left hand said—"I am here." Oh! what joy did my heart experience at the blissful sound! The clock struck twelve at that instant; and my dear mother's lovely wandering spirit stood before me—her hands seemed clasped as if praying for my safety. Eustace took my hand—the vision then pointed to the opposite side; I looked as
directed,

directed, stepping in extreme agitation, led by Eustace—and in an instant a door was open, and he took the lamp from me, that I might proceed the easier.

“ I then turned my head to take a farewell glance of the lovely spectre, and perceived her hands and eyes were raised to heaven, seemingly returning thanks. The sight overpowered me—I sunk on the shoulder of Eustace, and know not by what means I was conveyed from the chapel, as when I recovered, I found myself in a carriage with Alphonso, Eustace, and two gentlemen; in one of them I happily find a father restored, whom I have long lamented as dead.”

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

ADELINE having concluded the narrative of her miserable confinement and afflictions, during the recital of which, every heart suffered grief and astonishment, beyond the power of description; while each poured forth their unfeigned thanks to the author of all good, for her miraculous escape and preservation. But each being anxious to learn by what mystery the Count St. Julian had been concealed so many years, they entreated he would relate what had occurred during that period: after which they would concert the means best to pursue, in order to secure the common enemy.

St. Julian then began:—

“ I will commence the recital of my woes, from the time I was about to leave
the

the Castle of St. Clair; with every thing else, you seem acquainted better than I am myself.

“ On a night unusually stormy, when the vivid lightning was darting its angry beams, rendering the surrounding darkness more awful; and the thunder rolled tremendously over the building, which seemed to shake the castle to its foundation. On this awful night, I was surprized to find the man who attended me, neglect to bring my lamp, which occasioned my prison to be more horrible, being in utter darkness, except what light darted therein, from the jarring elements.

“ At length, however, he appeared—it was unusually late, for the castle clock had struck eleven near half an hour. As he left me, I thought he had neglected to secure the door, but could not flatter myself, that he really had omitted it. The hope of liberty seemed to revive me—I
went

went to the door, and found it was not fastened; my heart fluttered with joy I had many melancholy days been a stranger to. I looked down the steps, a light appeared at the bottom, and cast a faint gleam up the winding ascent. I listened, but could not hear the footstep of any human being, the light still remained stationary. I softly descended the stairs, and came to another door which was left half open, it led into a long gallery. I looked to the right and left, and turned to the latter, unknowing which way to take, I soon reached the extremity, which was a very large gothic window, strongly secured, and no prospect of escape appeared that way.

“ My heart felt depressed as I turned from the window, and feared any attempt to obtain my liberty would be a fruitless one, for no prospect appeared to animate me with hope. I then returned, and passed
by

by the foot of the stairs that led to my prison, proceeding on to the other end, near which a large door stood open that led into a spacious apartment.—Within several expiring lamps shed a glimmering ray. It now struck twelve, and every thing seemed silent in the castle, yet the storm had increased its violence, and was dreadfully loud: a more awful night I never remember.

“A few moments I hesitated—then stepped forward into the large room, which upon entering, the ornaments and decorations shewed it to be a chapel. At that instant, the lovely, well-known form, of my beauteous Eloise met me!—Oh! never shall I forget how my heart was shocked, and what it had suffered many preceding nights, to know that her dear restless spirit wandered wretched and disturbed.—She seemed interested in my being there, and pointed to a particular part of the chapel.

chapel.—Still I could not understand the meaning, and still she appeared solicitous that I should look at one particular spot.

“While I was looking about, a man entered at the opposite door, with a lamp in his hand. I started, for I feared to be found there.—He advanced, and looked fearfully as I thought at me, at that moment Eloise again pointed, and he seemed to understand her, for he approached the place, and said, “Oh, what open the door.” He then turned, and looking at me, asked who I was ;—regardless of what might ensue, I told him ;—immediately a door was opened through which he led me,—unknowing and scarce caring whither—yet what I felt at that moment, I cannot explain.

“After conducting me down a number of steps, and along an arched passage, dreary and gloomy in the extreme, and rendered

rendered more so by the faint light his solitary lamp afforded ; it seemed an unusual length, or my agitated mind, fancied it longer than it really was ;—however, we reached the extremity, where was a door strongly bolted and barred,—this he opened, whilst I trembled with apprehension lest it should be a dungeon, and that my former prison was going to be changed for a worse ;—but as it opened, the fresh air, the beating rain, the forked lightning, convinced me he was allowing me to escape—as also he said, (the words are still fresh in my memory)—“ There, God bless you!—be gone.” Astonishment tied my tongue and rivetted me to the spot, for I had not power to articulate one word to thank him, nor to move from the place ;—he pushed me outside the door, and barred it against me.

“ But when I found I was really free, though the awful storm, and beating rain
flashed

flashed horrors all around me. In the midst of this war of elements, I fell on my knees, and fervently returned thanks to the Almighty for this merciful and miraculous deliverance, and to the man, though beyond the reach of hearing me, for his kindness. I prayed for his welfare, and have never ceased to do so ever since."

"I thank your Lordship most heartily," interrupted Eustace, joyfully, who, during the course of Adeline's account, had been permitted to remain an attentive listener, as he had done her such a singular service.—"I remember the night well" said Eustace, "and remember also, that I never was so happy in all my life, as when I safely shut the door upon you."

"I must here inform you," said Madame de Belmont, "that you owe your deliverance to Eustace. I have valued
him

him the more ever since I learnt the service he had rendered you."

The Count profusely thanked him, and promised to make him a suitable reward, for services, which from the moment they were received, had never been absent from his mind.—He then proceeded.—

"Unknowing what first to pursue, or which way to go, and the rain pouring in torrents;—I passed on by the side of the Castle wall, which, at the extremity, was bounded by the sea, where just at the shore, lay an empty boat.

"I could not form an idea of what this could mean, for the surf run very high, and the boat lay dashing on the shore without any one to take care of it, so that I expected it would soon go to pieces. I examined, and found that it was made fast to the body of a tree that stood near the water's edge. I now looked round for a place of shelter from the storm,

storm, but none appeared that way ; so I returned, hoping to find a place that might screen me from the rain and tempest, which was very severe, till I could collect my thoughts, and endeavour to recollect what part of the country I was in.

“ At a short distance from this place, was a broken arch, which seemed to promise the wished for shelter. I entered, but soon found I was not there alone, for eight or nine men were there before me ; and as I found by one of them, who spoke tolerable good French, they were seamen, who had put on shore, on account of the storm, being with their boat near the land, and received the shelter this rude place afforded.

“ In about an hour, as we were still within hearing the sound of the Castle clock, the storm abated, but the rain continued ; and when these men left the arch, they

they insisted I should go with them. Vain was every kind of expostulation—that I had business of the greatest importance that called me to a distant part, or any thing I could urge—resistance was useless, overpowered by numbers, I was carried to the boat that lay by the shore, and was soon conveyed to a vessel, that lay at a short distance.—Alas!—it proved a Barbary Corsair.

“ I need not mention what my heart suffered on this cruel occasion, as I soon was put under the hatches. Yet I trusted that heaven, in its mercy, having delivered me from one evil, could not abandon me to the merciless cruelty of these hard-hearted barbarians. Patiently and calmly I resigned myself to a destiny unavoidable, praying the Almighty not to forsake me in this new distress.

“ After being about five days at sea, we arrived at Tunis, where I was immediately

diately sold for a slave to a person of high rank, named Muley Achmed.

“ In this situation I passed above three years, when the master of the slaves, observing me take a particular pleasure in the culture of flowers, had me removed from the occupation I was formerly employed in, to the flower garden. He also observed that melancholy preyed upon my heart, and that I delighted in being alone: his curiosity was excited, and I one day told him the whole of my unhappy story, for one derives a miserable consolation in hearing a person breath the voice of pity, and seeming to feel for one's misfortunes. —Selim, that was his name,—though a Tunician, seemed to have a feeling heart. From the moment he knew the history of my misfortunes, he treated me as a friend, and I sincerely believe, studied to lighten my captivity.—The culture of flowers,

was not a laborious employment, and in the end it proved a fortunate one.

“ After I had finished my day’s work, I usually retired to a very remote part of the garden, to indulge those melancholy reflections, that ever crowded on my mind, and where I could vent the anguish of my heart, as I imagined, unheard.

“ One evening, having retired to this place, I was strangely surprised to hear a female voice speak in my own language :—wonderful as it appeared, I remembered I was a slave, and probably she might be one; but indifferent to every thing, I forbore to reply, dreading the consequences.

“ In a few minutes, I perceived something fall at my feet, I stooped to take it up—it proved a small paper folded up. I immediately put it in my pocket, and looked up to see from whence it came.—By the light of the moon that shone serenely

renely bright : I perceived a female looking out of a small window above :—I made her a bow, and being anxious to examine the contents of the paper, retired to my own apartment,—to my surprise, the note was the following :—

“ I have heard your complaints—be assured there is one in Tunis, whose heart feels for your sufferings, and, though the favourite of Muley Achmed, cannot enjoy a moment’s happiness.—The splendid bondage—(I can call it no better)—to which I am consigned, adds to my affliction. I sigh for my dear native home, Naples—Have you the courage, or wish to break the bonds of slavery, which hold you, and to make me the partner of your flight ? I have valuables to a very large amount, which will be of service, let us hope for the best, and believe every thing possible.”

“ This strange note, without a signature, except that part which mentioned the favourite of Muley Achmed, excited uncommon surprise.—The wish of liberty was extreme,—but, alas! the prospect to me, seemed far—far distant—hope, so long depressed, refused to animate my bosom with one cheering ray, for the utter impossibility of ever returning to France, from the captivity I had so long experienced, had made me resigned, and I now dreaded lest the note was an artifice to sound my intentions. Unable to develop the meaning, and not knowing where to seek the writer, to obtain an explanation, it occupied my thoughts during the night, and the time of my work the next day.

“ When I had finished my day’s employment, I repaired to my usual retreat, and had not sat long, when a person in a slave’s habit advanced, and somewhat
amazed

amazed me by asking, "what answer I thought of returning to the note I received last night?" The voice which was feminine rather startled me, and I replied, "I know not what to think—situated as I am, there appears not the least probability, even if I had the inclination."

"Only make the attempt," she replied, "you will not find it so difficult as you imagine.—I have discovered a safe retreat—dare you be the companion of my fortunes?"

"I dare any thing for liberty, but it would be ungenerous. Selim treats me with every mark of tenderness, friendship, and respect, he has studied to make my miseries lighter; what an ungrateful wretch should I be to desert him. You, as the note expresses, are the favourite of Muley Achmed—ask your own heart, if it will be a return for favors received?" was my answer, and which I expressed with

great indifference, lest it was designed to try me.

“ Oh ! speak not of Muley Achmed,” said the woman, “ I acknowledge myself the unfortunate writer of that note, for I could trust no other with such a bold attempt. But ever since I have been distinguished by his favour, peace has been a stranger to my bosom, and I sigh in vain for my dear country, and dearer friends. —Ah, monsieur !—had you any one dear to you in your native land, you would not be thus inanimate—you would feel for them, the sorrow they must endure for your loss, the state of doubt and distraction they must be plunged in.—Yet still, monsieur, you remain unmoved—have you no friends, that can awake your affections,—no one you would wish yourself free from bondage to see ?”

“ Alas ! I have not,” I replied, “ every one that was dear to me I have lost by the wickedness

wickedness of a villain, who has seized on my estates; *that* alone would induce me to return to my native home, to retrieve my rights and punish him, but what comfort can the wretch expect, when he knows, that all that were dear to him, are no more!"

"Yet I will not believe you indifferent, as to what is your situation," she replied; "for certainly I think you would be glad to experience a change. I must now leave you—by to-morrow, what I have said, you will turn over in your mind—and I shall see you here in the evening. Consider well what I propose: farewell." She then suddenly disappeared.

CHAP. XXV.

“**STILL** the idea run in my mind, that this strange interview was only an artifice of the Tunician, to try, by temptation, the fidelity of his slave; and, though liberty was very desirable, I could not entertain a hope that it could be accomplished.— Yet her proposal served to unhinge my thoughts; the serenity I had some time enjoyed, arising from a consciousness of having submitted with resignation to the will of heaven, was now fled, and I spent the night, and following day, in restless inquietude.

“ After I had finished my daily labour, I retired to my usual resort, and only a few minutes had elapsed, before the woman, who had visited me the preceding night, appeared at a small door, so entirely

tirely shaded by vines and jessamines, that it was impossible any one could see her but myself.

"This way, monsieur," said she, "this way—time is precious,—despise not the intreaties of a woman, anxious for her liberty, and willing to assist you in escaping.—Slight not the present opportunity, if it is lost, another may not offer."

"Without allowing myself time for thinking how to proceed, I stepped to the door, and soon entered a sort of out building, where she waited. 'Speak not—answer not, but do as I direct, and follow me,' said she.

"She then produced a large cloak, that intirely covered me, and I put it on. Silently I followed her, through several remote kind of apartments, in which I saw not a human being. At last, we reached a small door, that remained half open, after we had passed the door, we

found it looked to an open country,—aided by the moon, we directed our steps to a grove, that appeared at a short distance—we passed through it—and in a short time reached the shore bordering the bay of Tunis.

“ All this way I had followed in silence, yet I felt extreme uneasiness lest we should be pursued ; and now that she had conducted me to the bay, of what utility was it, when, if we inquired for a vessel, we should betray ourselves.—My apprehensions for our safety were very alarming, and my companion now began to feel the absurdity of her enterprize, yet her courage did not forsake her.

“ While these ideas occupied our minds, we passed by a house that seemed for the reception of strangers;—a well-known face passed me, and entered it.—I was sure I was not mistaken, so stepped back, and asked if a Mr. Harley was there.—To my
inexpressible

inexpressible joy he appeared, and I taking aside my turban, he soon recollected me, and raised his hands in astonishment; I motioned to him to be silent, because many persons were passing backward and forward, and requested his attention in a private apartment;—my wish was complied with, and he led me and my companion into a small room, where I briefly run over my sufferings, and my present forlorn situation, in the English language; for Mr. Harley was an English gentleman of fortune, with whom, in happier days, I had been on terms of very friendly intimacy.

“ I am very happy,” replied Mr. Harley, “ that it is in my power to serve you so far, as to take you from hence; but it is utterly impossible for me to convey you to France;—in the first place, France and England are at war, though there is a great talk of peace being very near;

however, till that is, the ship would be endangered in going there;—in the next, the place of our destination is the East Indies, but have been here four days, having brought some dispatches for the English Consul, else I should not have been here.—But if you have no objection to that voyage, the boat now waits to convey me to the ship, and you shall gladly accompany me, and the first neutral port we come to, you may be fortunate enough to meet with a vessel, that will carry you safe to your native home.”

“ My female companion did not understand English; but I explained to her in French Mr. Harley’s offer, if she would accept of it, as it was utterly impossible to go to either France or Naples, till we could gain a conveyance in another ship.—“ O, any thing—any where,” she replied,—“ release me but from Muley Achmed, and any state is welcome.”

“ Mr,

“ Mr. Harley being fortunately just ready, we set out, and soon reached the boat ;—a few minutes brought us to the ship’s side.—My senses could scarce believe it was reality, for all that had passed within the last two hours, appeared a dream.

“ We were soon on board, and in the cabin—the wind was fair—the anchor soon weighed—and in less than three hours, we sailed from the bay of Tunis.

“ The favorite of Muley Achmed, as soon as the ship was under weigh, and she was convinced she was in safety, threw aside her slave’s habit, which concealed a person extremely beautiful, and a dress uncommonly elegant. She had concealed a quantity of jewels of great value in her clothes ; the cloak she had procured for me had also valuables to a large amount secreted therein.

“ Mr.

“ Mr. Harley was as much surprised as myself, for I really never saw her to my recollection before. She proved to be Victoria di Vicenza, a Neapolitan lady of quality, who, on her return from Corsica, where she had been with her father for the benefit of the air, his health being in a declining state, the vessel was taken by a Tunisian corsair.—But the greatest of this lady’s affliction was—she was married, and besides an affectionate husband, had a son, to lament her loss;—this made her anxious to reach her native country—but as that was for the present impossible, she was obliged to submit to fate, and continue on to the East with us, endeavouring to make herself as easy and reconciled to her unavoidable situation, as the nature would admit of. — Mr. Harley was appointed secretary to the Governor, and he had hopes to put us on board a neutral vessel, when we reached the Cape
of

of Good Hope, to be conveyed to our native homes.

“ We had been at sea about two months, and had experienced much stormy weather, when Victoria was seized with a violent fever, of which several of the crew had died since we left Tunis,—and the afflictions of her mind, dreading she should never more see her husband and son, augmented her disorder, and hastened her dissolution.

“ The day before she expired, she requested I would, as early as possible, let the Count di Vicenza know of her unhappy fate, and how ardently she wished to see him once more.—Also, that I would convey a ring to him, which she had promised never to part with, but at her death; and a letter that she had written at various times, wherein she had minutely related what had happened to her, ever since she left her native home. The jewels she entreated

treated I would accept, as they might be of use to me, destitute as I was, and in a foreign land, and *her* family had sufficient, —her only wish for bringing away the rich presents of Muley Achmed, was to pay for a conveyance to our native homes.— She most heartily prayed for my welfare, and repeatedly thanked me for the kind attention I had shewn her, ever since we quitted the garden of Muley Achmed.

“Soon after she had given charge of these things to me, she became delirious and continued so during the night, and at eleven o'clock next morning expired.— Her body was committed to the deep on the following day.

“Poor Victoria di Vicenza!—a sigh will escape, and a tear will drop, whenever I call to mind thy melancholy fate, in some instances similar to my own, which made me feel the more for her distresses,
while

while heaven permitted her to remain with us—the time was short—but I had received a sisterly affection from this amiable woman—her concern for my misfortunes—the sympathetic tears she had shed, when sad remembrance has introduced the afflicting narration of my loved Eloise!—My sufferings have abated some of their poignancy, and I have felt relief from the compassion of a fellow creature, who would steal a tear from her own sorrow, to bestow on mine;—and when I call to mind her generous fears, lest I should be reduced to want in a strange country, the bequest of her jewels to enable me to return to my native home, I cannot help breathing a sigh of gratitude and respect for a character so benevolent—so kind—so amiable.—The effusions of a grateful heart has often been poured forth in acknowledgment of those favours which I shall never lose sight of—for it is to her I owe my liberty—to her I
owe

owe every thing—and I find it impossible to forget the many obligations I owe to her family, for her goodness.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

“WE pursued our course, and arrived safe at Bengal; as I was not able to meet with a vessel at the Cape, to convey me to France, I continued with them, to their place of destination.

“Mr. Harley continued his friendship to me—my sufferings had interested his generous heart in my behalf. He presented me to the governor, who, notwithstanding the variance of the two nations, seemed happy to serve me; and did not consider a single individual, pressed by misfortunes, accountable for the dispute of their different kingdoms. The valuable jewels given me by *Victoria di Vicenza*, were soon converted into money—I enjoyed the smiles of the governor and Mr. Harley, whom every person was proud

proud to please. Uncertain when I should leave these worthy friends, I took the earliest opportunity of sending *Victoria di Vicenza's* letter and ring to her husband:—a gentleman whom I thought I could repose the trust in, was returning to England;—and I made him a very valuable present, if he would take a journey to Naples, and promise to deliver these things into the Count di Vicenza's own hand.—I also wrote a long letter, explaining why I could not wait on him myself, but that I would do so whenever fate allowed me to return to France;—and I entreated a letter to satisfy me, that he had received what I sent—which satisfaction I enjoyed as soon as the long distance would permit, and an invitation to pass some time with him at Naples.

One, two, three years rolled away, and no possibility presented itself, of returning to my native country—by degrees
the

the wish wore off, as I recollected, I left no one to mourn my absence. I found myself happy at Bengal.—What signified what part of the world contained me, while I enjoyed content, and the cheering smiles of unfeigned friendship.—I was carested by every one, and soon grew very rich,—in the course of eleven years stay there, I amassed a great fortune, and Mr. Harley's friendship continued, to whom I was indebted for many favors.

“ After a stay of this length, Mr. Harley wished to return home, especially as the climate had taken an affect on his health, and I had no desire of remaining behind him. We accordingly sailed from Bengal, and arrived in England in safety.

“ I staid in England a few months, and Mr. Harley being rather recovered from the indisposition he laboured under, insisted on accompanying me to France, as
he

he much wished to see me restored to my rights.

“ We arrived in France at Perpignan, for the reason that Mr. Harley designed to go to Montpellier, to establish his health. At Perpignan I inquired for the Count St. Julian, and was informed he resided at the Castle of St. Clair, which was not quite a league distant.

“ Mr. Harley and myself set out in a post-carriage, designing to stop at the village beyond it. We passed the castle, and it was pointed out to us by the driver ; immediately I recollected, upon looking on it, that this castle had been the place of my confinement, and from whence I had escaped. We remained at the inn till night, when I designed to walk, it being a fine moon, to the place, as I felt a secret desire to examine every part of it.

“ We

“ We pursued this inclination.—I looked all about it—discovered the door from which I had escaped full eighteen years ago—listened to the sound of the castle clock, which was as fresh to my memory, as if I had heard it but the day before. We then walked down to the sea, the fatal place from whence I had been taken by the crew of the Corfair.

“ As we returned, lingering and loitering to the castle, which place I really felt no desire to leave, I observed a man pass the gate, and curiosity prompted me to watch him, I knew not for why, but my heart was filled with strange expectation. By his apparent anxiety, the sudden thought rushed on my mind, that he waited to give liberty to some one, who felt the iron hand of St. Julian’s oppression—nor was I mistaken, as the narrative of my dear daughter fully explains,
and

and I soon found I had something to love on my return to my native home.

“ Thus far, I account for my long absence—and now, let me present this gentleman by the name of Harley, who has conferred so many favours on me, during that long absence. The anxiety I felt to hear the account of my daughter’s misfortunes, hindered my naming who it was before. Now I have related my long and tedious absence, let us think of concerting the means whereby St. Julian can be secured.

“ Time was precious, and few comments were made upon his long and mysterious absence for a nearer cause, the cause of their own safety made it necessary for them to proceed against the usurping Count St. Julian.—Yet fervently did every one present, return thanks for his happy re-appearance, and to Mr. Harley for his unexampled kindness.

“ Having

“ Having no time to lose, they immediately set out for La Salvetat to the magistrate, where Adeline gave testimony of De Courcy's confession. An arrest was issued against the Count St. Julian, to intercept his return from Paris.

The magistrate thought it most essential to have De Courcy secured as a principal evidence, and that his own words might be investigated, rather than his confession to Adeline.—No time was lost—three men were sent to the Castle of St. Clair, to seize and bring De Courcy before the magistrate.

Alphonso, Madame de Belmont, Adeline, her father, Mr. Harley, and Eustace, all set out immediately for Paris, believing, from Adeline's report, that it was dangerous to remain at Alphonso's house, at St. Amans, as the Count St. Julian, by De Courcy's declaration, determined on securing Madame de Belmont, and Al-

phonso conjectured every moment pregnant with danger, as his escape from the monastery of the Dominicans had been discovered, and the Count's present business was on that account; therefore, they judged it necessary to seek safety in Paris, where they might be ready to attend as soon as the intelligence of the usurping Count's capture reached that place.

Lulled in the security, that near nineteen years had allowed him to enjoy, the arrest was but a trivial surprise, for, in his own mind, he was positive Victor St. Julian was dead, and he had nothing to fear from the simple girl, his daughter, who, he was confident, was closely confined in the Castle of St. Clair. He fondly flattered himself that this arrest was the contrivance of Madame de Belmont, and perhaps the Baron de Semonville had joined in hopes to recover her, apprehensive that he had taken her away.—

Most

Most bitterly did he imprecate every evil to fall on those two, whom he much now feared he never should have the happiness of securing in his power, and what torments *that* thought brought to his revengeful breast.

Resolving in his own mind, that their hopes, however sanguine, should never be realized by the return of Adeline, he dispatched a person he thought he could rely on, with a letter to De Courcy, wherein he ordered, that if Adeline was not already dead, for her to suffer immediately, as his own personal safety required instant compliance to his will.

Unluckily for him, the officers sent to seize De Courcy, were already in the castle, when the messenger arrived,—they received the letter, bearing the orders for Adeline's death, and treasured it as a witness against him, as it proved, beyond a doubt, his horrid intentions, of which

Adeline had given testimony; as also they thought it proper to secure the messenger.

De Courcy was easily seized, but his ill health was a great misfortune, as they feared he never would be able to reach Paris alive; however he did, and as soon as he was committed to prison, feeling the approach of death, he requested a confessor, and a principal magistrate, that he might give a clear and full account of all his master's proceedings, as he feared he should not live to give his evidence on the day of trial.

His request was immediately granted, the confessor, the magistrate, and several officers attended, before whom he publicly and solemnly declared every circumstance that had occurred during his serving the Count St. Julian, formerly M. Delarsonne, of his being present when the said M. Delarsonne murdered Eloise countess St. Julian, and his diabolical scheme
of

of having the Count vilified as a traitor in order to obtain his estates.

The lamp of life seemed just to hold out while he confessed the crimes of his master and himself. He appeared penitent, and earnestly implored forgiveness of his offended God,—he expired. His confession was taken down in writing, with the names of the witnesses thereto, to be produced on the usurper's trial.

CHAP. XXVII.

BUT this trial was deferred a short time on account of the dreadful trial and sentence of De Castelle, which drew every ones attention. So various, so numerous, and accumulated were the accusations against him,—so powerful the combination of his enemies, that even some of his friends yielded to their potent arguments and persuasions, and, in the end, finally deserted him; for his enemies had now thrown off all regard to appearances, and scarce affected a colour of equity in their cruel proceedings. M. de St. Luce was the principal agent in this inhuman business, who so powerfully swayed the minds of the common people, that, what he said, seemed to be a law, and every person, by his arts, was to believe
as

as a truth the miserable tricks that were invented, and declared to be by the power of De Castelle's magic.

A few days previous to the day of trial, an event happened which created some alarm, although it had not power to soften the flinty hearts of his accusers.—The Abbess of the convent, at length, felt remorse. She, who had so unfeelingly exulted and tyrannized over the unfortunate Elinor,—she, who had been the principal in all the plots carried on against him, now felt the stings of an upbraiding conscience.—She publicly declared the fate of sister Clara, and produced the papers left by her, and two other nuns, who expiated their crimes with their lives on that day, when Clara confessed the cruel part she had taken to Elinor in the vault of the convent. Two other nuns followed the Abbess's example, and publicly confessed the part they had taken in this in-

famous plot—one of the seculars made the same avowal, but the principals of the conspiracy laughed at their declaration, which they insisted was only the devil's artifice to support incredulity.

Conscious innocence and unshaken fortitude, which was the constant companion of the unfortunate De Castelle, during a tedious confinement and sufferings almost unheard of, did not forsake him; he knew that if his enemies persecuted him in this world, their power and malignance could not reach to that to come; "and if they torture my body," said he, "they cannot hurt my soul. I submit to all heaven's rigid decrees, and pray for fortitude in the trying hour of affliction, that the sufferings of my body may not incline me to despair." During his wretched imprisonment, he wrote a collection of prayers and sermons, that breathed nothing but piety and devotion, such

such as any unprejudiced person would instantly declare, they could not be the productions of a magician's brain.—He feared not death—but when he turned his thoughts towards Elinor,—when he remembered the fond affection she bore him, that, in all probability, by this time she was a mother, and what her gentle heart must suffer, when convinced of their final separation, the awful certainty would in a few days be decided: these thoughts robbed him of his serenity and fortitude at times, though he never mentioned her, but two days prior to his death, when every hope of liberty had fled, he revealed their connection to his mother, who was the only person permitted to see him, and of whom he was remarkably fond. He then penned a few lines to be conveyed by her to the unfortunate object of his tenderest affections, wherein he assured her, of his unalterable love, and what

he endured at the bare idea of parting with one so truly dear to him; how he besought her to endeavor to feel comfort, and not give way to a useless despair—how fervently he had prayed for her peace of mind, and should continue to do so while life inhabited his bosom; and concluded, by bidding her a final farewell.—The manner in which he expressed himself, shewed the emotions of his troubled soul.

When he had finished his melancholy farewell, he gave it his mother, for her to find some means of getting it conveyed to her hands. Madame de Castelle, who had heard of Elinor's sufferings, the rumour of her confinement having spread itself abroad, and which the Count her father, had publicly declared, when he left the country, and was beyond the reach of Dampiere or his minions; but not imagining her son had any connection with that lady, forbore
to

to wound him with other people's troubles, when his own were too oppressive. She now related some part of what she had heard, suppressing, as much as possible, any relation that might afflict him, or call his mind from the preparation he was making to appear before the tribunal of the most high. She related her escape by miracle, after a long confinement in the vaults of the convent, where the nuns were reported to be possessed; that she was now safe, for the Count her father had taken her beyond the reach of her persecutors, dreading that, when she came to be missed, they might pursue her, and make her sufferings redouble; and had thought proper to publish the proceedings against her, and the treatment she had received, on account that as she was privately stolen away, he had advertised her, and offered large rewards to whoever should discover her, and now thought it ne-

cessary to let the public know she was found. "The charge," continued she, "against her was, I understand, that she was an accomplice and assistant in the crimes you are charged with;—not conceiving that lady had any knowledge of you, or you of her, was the reason why I never mentioned the circumstance, it is now about a fortnight since she escaped, and within this week that the story is in circulation,—but she is safe, so compose your mind, and let it not suffer additional distress."

De Castelle was thunder-struck at this detail of his beloved Elinor's sufferings—and exclaimed—"Merciful God! I thank thee for preserving one so truly dear—what inhumanity to treat her with severity—but I know her heart, she must have suffered numberless ills—and I, alas! unable to assist her—had I known it during her confinement, the thought would have driven me to madness—in my situation it

was

was well I did not, for unable to bestow her relief, my mind would have been tortured and unprepared, for what in a few days will arrive.—Yet, Oh!—if I never am permitted to see, or hear from her more—if that dear voice is no more permitted to charm my enraptured ears, or to speak comfort to a wretch like me—if I never am allowed to see that unfortunate little being, the hopes of which once gave delight to my enraptured soul,—mercifully condescend, O gracious and supreme God! to soften the afflictions of her heart, and to comfort and give peace to that gentle bosom, which never knew a sorrow till connected with me—mercifully grant thy protection, and be a father to the fatherless offspring our union has given being to—support it with thy tender mercies, and guard it from the wiles of deceitful men, that it may not suffer like its unhappy father.—And, Oh! pardon those
pangs

pangs which nature feels, when anguish and despair rend the afflicted heart !

“ O Elinor ! for thee I suffer,—it is not the fear of death, for that I feel not a dread—it is not the cruel torments that are preparing to distort my body, that gives one moment’s anxiety or pain—but that which thy tender heart will feel, when that awful moment arrives, that commits thy wretched husband to the flames ! for such I am told is my doom.—For ever, and for ever, farewell, Elinor !—thou art beyond the reach of hearing my complaints, nor would I wish to wound thy gentle nature so far, to have a desire of your being a witness to my sufferings.—Yet sure I find not, when I declare, I could feel supremely happy, and the rigor of fate would be beguiled of some of its woe, were I permitted to see you once more, and personally take a last farewell.—But as that is a blessing I never can expect to enjoy, I will
banish

banish the thought, and satisfy myself with commending you, dear, much loved unfortunates, to the father of all mercies ! ”

Scarce had he concluded these words, when an officer entered with the fatal sentence, which was to be put in execution in two days. This did not alter the serenity of his soul—yet he could not forbear deploring the wicked contrivances that had brought on a fate so full of horror.

Thus, by the diabolical schemes of a most implacable fraternity, an innocent man became the devoted victim of a malicious hatred, unprecedented in the annals of any nation; and because the King, the Cardinal, the Bishop, and a few of the leading minions of monkish despotism believed it, all others believed themselves justified in so doing; and when art was exhausted, and imagination could no longer frame accusations against him, he
was

was condemned to be stripped of his ecclesiastical dignity, to be tortured and burnt, before the church of St. Croix, at Loudun. After suffering every indignity from the insulting brethren, that could be inflicted, and enduring torments that the human heart shudders to name—with a placid composure and serenity, he met his rigorous fate, and bore his sufferings, resigning his breath on the 18th of August, 1634.

A short time intervened after the death of this ill-fated man, and the trial of De-larsonne, who has been known by the name of the Count St. Julian.

The king, who felt no pity for the fate of De Castelle, *who* had credulously listened to, and believed every idle tale raised by his enemies against him, could not imagine his favorite guilty of the crimes he was charged with, though Victor Count St. Julian had presented his
Majesty

Majesty a petition, explaining every circumstance of his opponent's atrocities, together with the confession of De Courcy. Revolving these shocking occurrences in his mind, the monarch suspended the belief till the day of trial condemned or acquitted him ;—and he began to fear, from the minute recital of horrid events, and some faint recollection, though at that distant period, of the strange death of the Countess, which he had heard whispered, though no one had ever ventured positively to declare or explain, that his favorite's offences could admit of no palliation.—However, disguising what were his real sentiments, he invited the Count St. Julian to Court, and expressed a happiness, that he had returned to his native land, after so long an absence.

I will now return to Delarsonne, a prisoner in the Bastille.—Gold, that potent chief, could not bribe the keepers to give him

him any information concerning the true cause of his confinement—all knowledge thereof wore an air of resistance, which did not well agree with the natural impetuosity of his temper. After a short space of time, the news of De Courcy's death found access to his ear.—He started at the thought that he had been a prisoner, but soon the flatterer, hope, re-animated his bosom, he fancied, as De Courcy was dead, the horrid secrets he was in possession of, died with him. This hope gave him courage, and lulled in security, and the belief that he still continued high in favor with the king, induced him to think he should soon regain his liberty; yet each moment to him was an age, as he had no certain information of Adeline's fate, and the Baron de Semonville had escaped the fury of his vengeance—was now at liberty, and bid defiance to his power, not having been able to regain him, or to seize Madame

dame de Belmont, that he might wreck his resentment on her.

In the midst of these perturbed sensations, which ever agitate a guilty mind, the order came for his preparing for trial on the following day.—At length promises of large rewards, induced one of the keepers, who had not long been there, to relate to him the rumour his confinement occasioned; for, as he, being a person of rank, it must naturally cause various conjectures in the minds of the public.—From him he learnt, of the Count St. Julian's return, after being a prisoner in Tunis, and remaining elsewhere during the long period of eighteen years and upwards;—of Adeline's escape from the Castle of St. Clair, and being one of his principal accusers:—the Baron de Semonville's knowledge by whom he was confined in the monastery of the Dominicans, at Loudun, and the search made to seize him

him again, and Madame de Belmont;—lastly, the confession and death of De Courcy, which accounted for all the accusations brought against him. This last intelligence struck him with despair—fate seemed to have caught him, and he gave himself up for lost: so natural it is for guilt to be its own accuser, and to reproach the heart that dictated, the hand that acted, with so much inhumanity.

From the moment he obtained this information of the keeper, the peace he enjoyed, from a consciousness of his security, fled; he despaired of ever more seeing the outside of the Bastille, but to be led to trial, or to death. Each succeeding moment brought with it new horrors, and wrought his mind to a pitch of phrenzy.—How was he to avoid the fatal condemnation?—How must the public, who, had so homaged him, execrate him now they knew his crimes?—A favourite,
when

when the fatal day of disgrace arrives, is generally the object of public scorn.—How was these evils to be avoided! death only could save him from the ignominious sentence, that he had not a doubt would ensue. By turns thoughtful, enraged, dejected, distracted, he recollected having purchased a most powerful drug, on the day of his seizure, with the intent to hasten to the Castle of St. Clair, and with his own hand administer it to Adeline, if she had not already suffered, as he began to suspect, (being jealous of every trifle,) that De Courcy's heart was not proof against her beauty, as he fancied he seemed affected, and inwardly pitied her, when he gave the orders for her death; though at the time the order was given, he had little doubts; but absence had created a thousand suspicions. He felt a joy at the thought, that fortune, foreseeing what would ensue, had prompted him to buy
this

this poison —Yet he feared, that when the keepers searched him on his entrance, they might have taken it,—between hope and despair he examined, and by good fortune it had eluded the vigilance of the keepers of the Bastille. Without a moment's hesitation, he infused it in some water, and drank it off,—feeling at that awful moment, an exulting kind of savage happiness, in having it in his power to elude the blow of justice.—He then took up a pen, and wrote on a scrap of paper, the following, which he addressed to the Count St. Julian:—

“ France cannot contain two such enemies as you and I are :—I have enjoyed my revenge on all I ever had a dislike to, and have triumphed in the ambition my swelling soul thirsted for, for full eighteen years. Oh ! how I exult in the thought of what I have made you feel—it makes the stroke of death fall lighter,—take then
your

your rights, but you cannot recal the dead !”

He could proceed no further, the hand of death put a final period to his ferocious existence; and he died, the hardened, revengeful, unrelenting tyrant, he had lived.

In the morning when the court had assembled, an officer was dispatched to bring the prisoner—he returned confused, bringing the paper, which, when read, put the whole assembly into a consternation. Yet though the principal was dead, and by his death the Count St. Julian was restored to his rights, they thought it necessary to examine those who took De Courcy’s confession, in order to clear the character of the Count, as, to obtain those estates, M. Delarsonne had declared him a traitor.

It was accordingly done, to the satisfaction of all parties, and the King condescended

descended to receive, and reinstate him in his favour, as also to disbelieve every assertion that had been made by the wretch Delarsonne, to vilify his character, and depreciate him in his Majesty's esteem.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

A Few days after this event, the Count St. Julian, accompanied by his daughter, Madame de Belmont, the Baron de Semonville, and Mr. Harley, set out to take possession of his estates, attended by their respective servants. He felt a pleasure in re-visiting every well known scene; and first, the Chateau Bellevue, from whence he had been cruelly torn from all he held dear.—Forgetting that Adeline had mentioned Madame Delarsonne, and her children, (formerly Countess St. Julian,) had been exiled to that place. As he entered, the mournful widow and the three children met him, habitted in deep mourning, she cast herself at his feet, and implored his mercy and generosity, as they were no accomplices in M. Delarsonne's

sonne's crimes, whose unhappy fate, as her husband, and the father of her children, she could not forbear to lament.

"Rise, madam," said the Count, "and do not imagine to find in me an enemy; I refrain mentioning the tormenting conflicts that are bursting my heart, as you, madam, perhaps are unacquainted with M. Delarsonne's enormities, and will not wound you with complaints, that may appear like reproaches; yet, when I enter these doors, where blessings once awaited to receive me—can I forbear to mourn the sad reverse?—Can I forget my lovely Eloise was murdered by his unrelenting hand? even in her own apartment when illness confined her to her bed. This, madam, is my daughter, Adeline, to whom you once addressed a note, believing her name was De Belmont; when you quitted the Castle of St. Clair."

Adeline

Adeline stepped forward, and with her accustomed tenderness, endeavored to offer her consolation.—The party then entered the Chateau. The Count St. Julian and Madame de Belmont soon visited every well known apartment, while Adeline and Alphonso waited to soothe the sorrows of Madame Delarsonne and her unfortunate children, whose situation excited pity from every feeling breast.

The Count was absent some time, giving way to the tumultuous conflicts that swelled an oppressed heart, and indulging the melancholy satisfaction of mourning his beloved Eloise, unobserved by any eye but Madame de Belmont's, who knew the tender affection he bore his wife, and his extreme grief for her loss. While she remembered that, in this very apartment in which they now were, she had last seen her friend, and listened to those commands, that seemed a fore-knowledge of

what would ensue; and busy memory presented her as when she last spoke, and bade an everlasting farewell to her, and her helpless little charge.—She even fancied she saw her, and listened, expecting to hear the sound of her voice. The Count at this moment rushed from the chamber, unable to bear the chilling recollection, and Madame de Belmont soon joined the party in the parlour.

When the Count appeared, he seemed to have gained considerable composure, and joined himself in conversation with the rest of the company.

Madame Delarsonne, with meek eyed patience pictured on her expressive countenance, silently awaited the Count's order of how she was to act; for at present, she knew not that the Castle of St. Clair was her property. But he soon informed her, as also that he expected she would collect such of her property, as was at the
Chate^{au}

Chateau Bellevue, and to quit it in the course of a fortnight, which consoled her very much, as she expected nothing else than an order to depart instantaneously, which would have been very inconvenient.

The Count, attended by Mr. Harley, then set out for his other estates, and took possession of them;—remaining a few days at each, he returned to his favourite residence the day before Madame Desarsonne's departure.

A short time elapsed, in settling the Count's affairs, when the marriage of Alphonso and Adeline took place, and to them he resigned the Castle, and extensive domains of St. Julian, near Aiguillon, in the province of Guienne, delightfully situated on the banks of the Garonne; but he chose them to remain a considerable time at the Chateau Bellevue with him, in hopes of dispelling the anx-

xiety and gloom that, in spite of all his endeavors, hung heavy on his mind.

A short time previous to their marriage, Alphonso received a letter from the Count de Montmorenci, which was brought to him from his house at St. Amans; the Count mentioned their being in health and safety, but that he must judge of the state of Elinor's mind, as it was beyond his power to describe, and that Elinor had been brought to bed of a son on the very day that De Castelle suffered execution. "Poor Elinor!" sighed Madame de Belmont, "what miseries has thy tender heart sustained; may heaven relieve the pressure of thy woes!" Alphonso uttered as fervent a wish—and a regular correspondence was carried on between them and the Count de Montmorenci.

The first year of Adeline and Alphonso's marriage, they were blest with a son, and
in

in the course of the second, the Count, unknowing how to reward Madame de Belmont for her friendly attachment to his wife, and the tender affection she had shewn his daughter, through all their difficulties, offered her his hand in marriage, in hopes that the society of this excellent woman would, in some measure, console him for his irreparable loss,—who would pity the sorrow that at times clouded his brightest moments, as she knew the source from whence these sorrows sprung. Madame de Belmont soon after became Countess St. Julian, and was an ornament, and honor to her character.

Five years of uninterrupted happiness rolled away, blessed with every felicity that could fall to their share, when the Baron received a letter from the Count de Montmorenci, informing him, that he, with Elinor and her lovely child, were about to return to France, as the death of
Dampiere,

Dampiere, which was, soon after followed by that of Cardinal Richelieu, would enable them to revisit their native home, without fear of any farther persecution; they being her most inveterate enemies. Powerful as was their sway on earth—inflexible and hardened as they were to the voice of pity, or the common feelings of humanity, over whom the Cardinal's exalted situation, or Dampiere's despotism, enabled them to crush beneath the iron rod of oppression, they now were numbered with the dead, and summoned to atone for their misdeeds.

The arrival of the Count, with Elinor and her child, a beautiful boy of five years of age, and named Henry after his unfortunate father, soon followed the receipt of this letter;—but that ill-fated Elinor was wonderfully altered—time had not permitted her to be perfectly recovered from her melancholy situation, after
quitting

quitting the convent, before the news of her husband's dreadful fate reached her ear. A settled grief—a saddened melancholy languor, which no time could obliterate from remembrance, though the object that created her sorrows, had long since been at peace, yet the incessant grief that preyed on her mind, declared how much she mourned the unfortunate De Castelle.

They were received with every mark of friendship and esteem, by Alphonso and Adeline—and the Count de Montmorenci felt a pleasure in congratulating the Count St. Julian, on his happy return. He found the Count and all his family supremely happy—his esteemed Alphonso, surrounded by a lovely group of beautiful children; and blest with a wife, whose charms were sufficient to make him envied.—And that Madame de Belmont, who had treated his unhappy Elinor with such kindness, was raised to a situation in
rank,

rank, which her merits deserved and adorned.

Alphonso felt a secret pleasure in observing that the sternness of the Count de Montmorenci towards Elinor had quite abated, and the most affectionate tenderness had succeeded thereto, for he saw, with regret, that every hope of happiness on this side heaven, had fled from the bosom of Elinor, whose unalterable affection for her husband, and the recollection of his cruel sufferings, could never be effaced from her mind.—Her son she adored—but it was a melancholy kind of love, that often wrung her heart, as she pressed him to her bosom.

The Count de Montmorenci soon set out for Paris—but Elinor, at Adeline's request, remained with her at the Castle of St. Julian. She endeavored every thing in her power to mitigate and assuage the affliction that wrung the heart of her
unhappy

unhappy guest, whose dejection seemed to increase, for she had not a wish to talk—yet at times, Alphonso found a way to draw her from this solitary turn of mind, by recounting their mutual sufferings in the caverns of the convent, from which they had escaped—and as this was the only subject, except De Castelle, that would lead her into conversation, it was often repeated, and when De Castelle was named, she joined in discourse with a degree of fervour. Adeline flattered herself, that time and frequent repetitions of those sufferings, might draw her from that solitude of thought—nor were they mistaken;—for Elinor grew remarkably fond of Adeline and her children—had a fond affection for the Countess St. Julian, and left them to attend her father with a degree of reluctance, which, in a great measure, induced the Count de Montmorenci, to purchase a seat near the residence of those esteemed friends,

friends, whose society formed a happy circle, and they passed their lives in peace and ease. And those who had felt the severest misfortunes and disappointment of their fairest hopes, namely, the Count St. Julian and Elinor, in time gained a serene composure, and strove to feel content.

F I N I S.



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